The
COMMONWEAL
A Weekly Review of Literature the Arts and Public Affairs
FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

Editors:
PHILIP BURNHAM EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.
HARRY LORIN BINSSE, *Managing Editor*
MICHAEL WILLIAMS, *Special Editor*
JOHN BRUBAKER, *Advertising Manager*

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Week by Week

THE RESULTS of the secret Anglo-French negotiations on Hitler's Sudeten demands raise anew certain questions which involve the maintenance of any semblance of peace and right order in this troubled world. Speaking from the comparative security of America's geographical remoteness, natural wealth and deafness to political ideologies, and allowing for the political considerations which have been concealed from the world at large, it would seem that the best that can be said for the Anglo-French démarche is that it was a genuine attempt to stave off another European war. What such a war would mean in human terms and the results today of the last war "to save the world for democracy" should not be forgotten. But such factors as the secrecy and dispatch with which the plans were drawn up after Czechoslovakia had been weakened by granting useless concessions would seem only to have encouraged Hitler to amplify his demands. How can the Czechs expect anything of the territorial guarantees of a France and a Britain that so suddenly deserted them? When Hitler makes his next unprovoked move toward the Ukraine, what then? Has war been averted or merely postponed? A policy of opportunism on the part of "victorious" powers bent on keeping all they can, could hardly be expected to attain success against a dynamic, well-marked program like Adolf Hitler's. Perhaps for the first time in history Britain's traditional opportunism has more than met its match.

The Czechs and Europe

ANY PERMANENT solution of the problem of the nations would have to take into account the past errors recalled by the terms, Versailles, Manchukuo, Ethiopia and Vienna. In other words the ideals toward which new settlements should tend would mark a real departure from international relations as we know them today and toward what Geneva should have been. Agreements should be objective in character, based on free negotiations rather than threats of force or memories of past defeats, and recognizing limitations in the theory of sovereignty, and the basis of convenience as well as natural law in the formation and boundaries of states. Adequate provision should be made for peaceful change. Although the over-all organization of international relations must be more universal than the League ever succeeded in becoming, a realistic approach to necessary sanctions indicates that enforcement agreements must at first be more limited in scope, perhaps regional in character and involving primarily the powers which cannot escape being directly involved anyway. The military and economic armament race which is bringing the peoples of Europe to increasing impoverishment and desperation must be reversed; this would become increasingly possible if the "haves" would grant freer access to their abundance of markets and raw materials. Such might be the direction of hopeful international efforts in the long run; the problem of the moment is how far to accede to Adolf Hitler.

Problems of Population

A NUMBER of times during the last few months THE COMMONWEAL has had occasion to draw attention to the problems involved in changes in population trends. The natural attitude of a person hearing of these changes, and impending changes, is one of disinterest. We are daily confronted with the troubles of September—or October or November—1938; what concern is it of ours that the basic constitution of our population will be different in 1955 or 1980 from what it is today? And yet the problems implicit in the changes fore-

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cast are immediate problems. We hear of the amiable notions of the generous Dr. Townsend; we hear of "thirty dollars every Thursday." And both these heart-warming schemes emanate from California, where, in certain districts at least, the percentage in the general population of persons over fifty is far higher than in the rest of the country. Let us remember that present population tendencies point to a large increase nationally in the proportion of persons over fifty. In 1900, 4 percent of our people were above sixty-five. In 1980 about 15 percent will be. In 1900 almost half our people were under twenty; in 1980 only a scant quarter will be. Does one not view in a rather different light proposals of the Townsend-Downey variety when one takes all this into account? So far we Americans have never had occasion to expect to see the day when organized campaigns for "more babies" would be a regular feature of our lives. We know such things have happened in Europe; we are likely either to view them with gentle condescension or to attribute them to some base motive on the part of wicked dictators. Yet many Americans now in their twenties and thirties may conceivably live to see this very sort of campaign in our own country. Certainly we are likely to hear more about family allowances and marriage subsidies.

ALREADY we are confronted with a decrease in enrolment in our elementary schools; as this spreads to the high schools and colleges, our whole educational set-up is bound to submit to change. And an increase in the dependent aged will make larger the social burden of their care. Then again employers will in time find a shortage in the youthful labor market, unless technological advance enables our national economy to confine all its productive work to persons in the lower age levels—an unhappy Californiation, or Floridation, of our country to which few could look forward with equanimity. And it must be borne in mind that the population changes which threaten in this country are but a delayed manifestation of changes already well under weigh in Western Europe. Even learned experts constantly assume that if we let down our bars against immigration, everything will change and we will receive once more great numbers from abroad, as we did in the nineteenth century. But is there any reason to believe that Europe will let them come, or that they will want to come, given her own changed situation? Canada and Mexico are still reservoirs for immigrants, but only minor ones. Finally we must remember that our whole productive economy has been based on expansion in the number of consumers rather than on the expansion of the buying capacity of each consumer. If our population is becoming a stable thing, it is all the more necessary that we attend to the reshaping of our economic structure and to increasing the earning capacity of the citizen.

Little and Big Business

INDICATIONS of anti-monopoly activity have increased during the past few weeks. The Federal Trade Commision has been unusually active issuing complaints and cease and desist orders for over a year, until now the accumulation of its work is news. Proponents of the Patman anti-chain-store bill have been loudly preparing for a new drive in the next Congress, and the Great Atlantic and Pacific has published a sudden counter-blast in the nation's newspapers. Most significant, the legislative-executive Anti-Monopoly Committee has been doing spade work and has scheduled public hearings for November. There is, however, nothing that resembles a popular wave of trust-busting emotion. The public is confused by the monopoly issue, and is no longer, as in the days of the Sherman and Clayton Acts, thrilled by the prospect of badgering big business. Charles A. Beard points brilliantly to the root of this confusion in the *New Republic* for September 21. He believes that "no broad policy respecting bigness in business is likely to emerge from the new investigation. At bottom, any broad policy, as distinguished from patching up little holes in the law, rests not upon such congressional investigations. A broad policy is an interpretation of American history—nothing less than that." Mr. Beard has "come to the conclusion that ours is, and in the nature of things is destined to be, a great continental, technological society." He apparently considers this integrated centralized system of production and distribution to be one of those "fundamental elements in the processes of human history which are inexorable as the processes of nature." Thus he shows that in dealing with business bigness and monopoly, the country is up against two profound problems. One is the rather philosophic one about causality: to what extent human history is determined outside men's wills and how much it is "a plastic thing which legislators may mold to suit the fabric of their dreams." It is just to ask, too, if men may mold some forces of history more than others, in what category does the progress of integrated industrialism come?

THE MORE naturalistic question Mr. Beard raises, which must be answered before intelligent monopoly legislation can be written, is one Mr. Beard assumes the answer to, with little explanation as to why he takes his stand: What are the deepest and dominant technological and natural impulsions right now influencing the trend of economy, whether this trend is inexorable or not? Mr. Beard implies that in sum they are now what they were in the nineteenth century, the same

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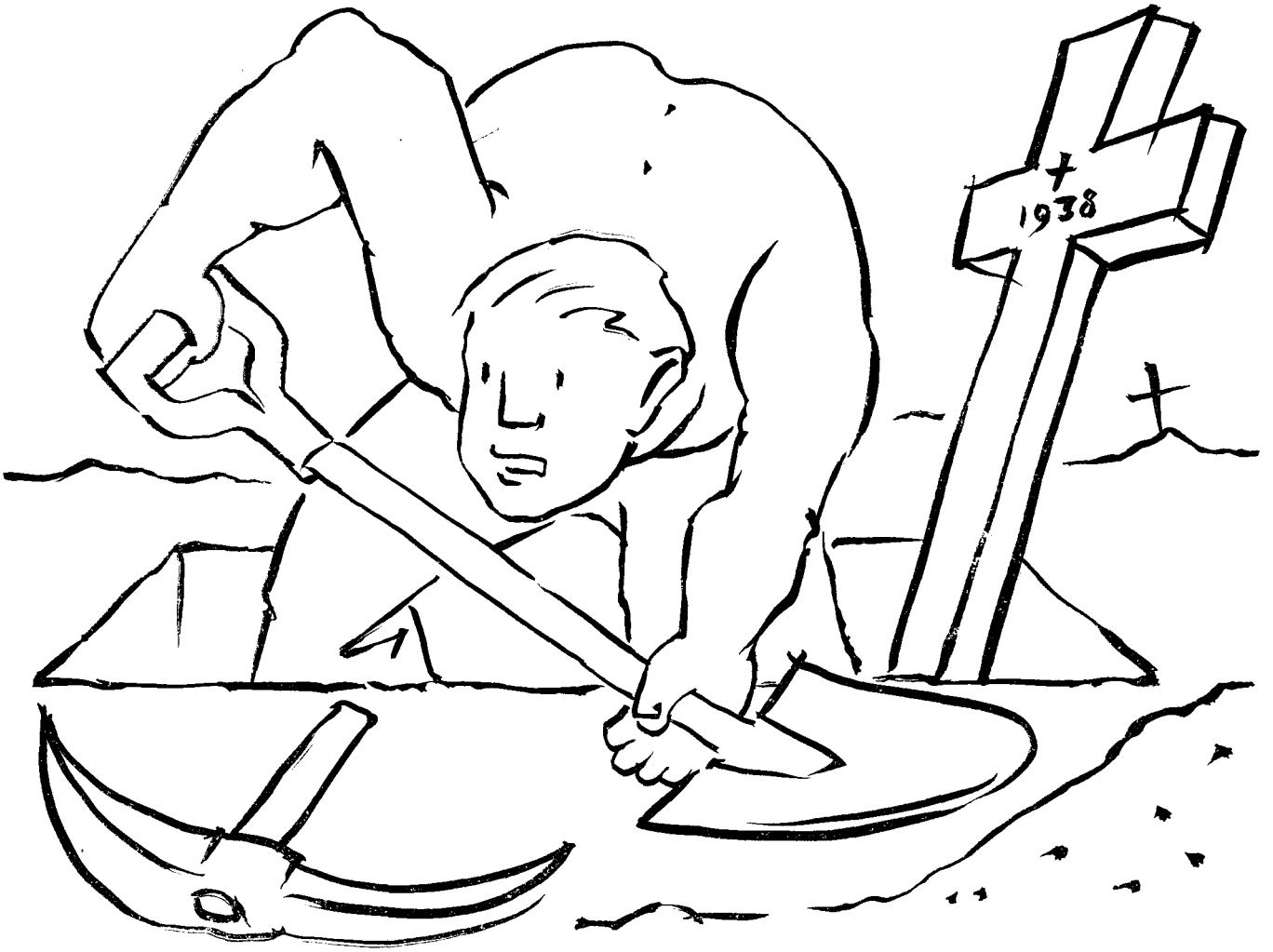

Preparedness

movement toward continental industrial integration. Before accepting all the connotations of this we would like more light on several important questions. These questions and considerations, and undoubtedly many others, will have some influence on the trend of economy: The continent is no longer virgin; the period economically suitable for methods of "mining" is giving place to a permanent period requiring methods of cultivation. Science and mechanics are developing light and mobile machinery and better methods for power development and transmission. Overhead costs to consumers, including enormous insurance costs of one kind or another, are to an extent parasitic charges caused by present integration; the practical saving or loss from integration is thus almost unknown. Just as real as the problems of applied science are these other technological problems of administration, red tape, indirection and bureaucracy. Since these considerations may be influencing the ground swell of our economy in a new direction, the public need not accept off-hand answers such as Mr. Beard's, although we would do well to ponder his well-asked questions.

Management and Society

GOVERNMENT, investors, workers and consumers all had their innings at the International Management Congress held in Washington at the United States Chamber of Commerce Building and attended by 2,000 delegates from twenty-two different countries. The shadow of the European crisis gave an unexpected turn to the course of the various sessions, but in the main they dealt with the more limited problems of running a business and maintaining successful public relations. The attention paid to the consumer and the jobholder was an indication that business's new social consciousness is still growing. If the press reports of the various sessions are any indication, certain views may now be said to be inherent in the outlook of our American business men. Labor's right to organize

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and the stake of the working man in his individual job is generally recognized but union violence is condemned outright. The consumer must be persuaded that industrial enterprise is enjoying harmonious labor relations. The government must hereafter interfere less with the conduct of private enterprise, satisfactory employer-labor agreements being preferable to change by legislative fiat. Two developments would consolidate the undoubted progress already made. If the consumer awakens to his function and his power, he can force industry toward a less myopic outlook. If labor is educated and encouraged toward sharing responsibility with management, the painful class conflicts of the present American scene will be resolved into class collaboration.

Union Un-Employed

IT IS perfectly natural that workers on unemployment relief projects should organize. Mr. Victor Ridder, testifying before the Dies Committee about his experiences when he was WPA Administrator for New York, expressed this opinion, "At first I dealt with them [the Workers Alliance] on the theory that there was no reason why the workers should not have organization." It is also natural that those who hold revolutionary aspirations should attempt to work most intensely among unemployed workers—the most proletarian of the proletariat. So Mr. Ridder added, "But I soon found out that the work of these groups was not constructive." As time and the continued unemployment gives more opportunity to look at the problems and to react to them, ideological splits among the unemployed are bound to make themselves felt. Now the field of the Workers Alliance has been broken into by two new organizations, the Federal Project Workers and the WPA Employees Association of America. The first is under AFL auspices, and is formed for white-collar and arts projects workers; the other is apparently an independent organization for laborers as well as white-collar WPA men and women.

THE APPEAL of both is a straight union appeal—wages and working conditions—and anti-communist, for the Workers Alliance is considered by the unemployed as well as the nervous employed to be thoroughly dominated by the Communist party, and to mix politics with union work. The economic and social problems of the country appear most intensely in the field of the unemployed, and must be dealt with there in the same way as elsewhere, but, because the situation there is more intense, with greater consciousness and care. More powerful groups must not take advantage of the unemployed and bind them with restrictions that are not applied to the rest of the population; they must be given just as much of the freedom of the man with a regular job as possible. They will probably take care of themselves, for they are in their vast number a huge bureaucratic element, with increasing esprit de corps and power to exert influence on the government.

Government and the Home

MODERN secular society has rediscovered the family; but equally, it does not know what to do with, or about, the family. Many confident forces can be seen at work making this discovery. Psychology finds the children of divorce preponderantly "defensive" and neurotic. Sociology traces back the adult criminal through the juvenile offender to the home broken by poverty which created him. Medicine speaks out for the wholesomeness of family relations. Fiction begins to celebrate the enduring marriage. But none of these agencies has the formula for what it praises. None, of itself, understands the real character of marriage and the family: that, even aside from religion, the family is a separate, self-constituted unit, sacred in a very real sense—and also, in a very real sense, though it is the bulwark of society, outside society. This incomprehension was shown once more at the recent National Conference on Family Relations, held in New York; where, amid much that is sound and true regarding modern menaces to the home, there was put forth, and apparently adopted, the project of asking for a governmental department on marriage and the family. This is the worst sort of confusion on a matter of vital importance to the whole of society; it puts the emphasis where it cannot possibly do any good, and must inevitably do much harm, by spreading a wrong philosophy and promoting well-meant but disastrous interference. For while there is a certain external protection which the government must give the home, defending its status and securing the decency of its subsistence by fair wage laws; and while it must occasionally step into the abnormal home to shield the innocent, in so far as they can be shielded—there is nothing else it can do. Not only its rights but its powers are severely limited. The family is an ancient energy, anterior to government. Only something even more timeless and strong than itself can cope with it, enhancing and purifying it at its best, feeding and restoring it when it flags.

Organized Medicine Speaks

THE EMERGENCY session of the American Medical Association which has just ended in Chicago is significant in view of the medical history being enacted at present. When, at the national health conference in July, the prevailing idea seemed to be to solve the whole staggering problem of medical costs by letting government — especially federal govern-

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ment — do it, the association, which represents most of organized medicine in this country, was widely criticized by the public for producing no alternative plan. As the profession's authoritative body, it reiterated its often-voiced and wholly right criticism of socialized medicine; but it had no constructive means for avoiding it. Subsequently, its opposition to voluntary group practice—in many minds the most promising of such means—has reached the pitch of legal conflict in the District of Columbia. Hence it is interesting to follow the decisions of the Chicago session, which was called to consider the government's July program. Those who hoped for a reversal of the association's stand on group medicine will be disappointed; the resolutions adopted leave the medical problem of the middle classes untouched in that important regard. But they do register a more positive and forward-looking attitude in many ways: approving "the principle of hospital service insurance" (without medical care); "cash indemnity insurance plans to cover the costs of emergency or prolonged illness"; and "the expansion of workmen's compensation laws." Also, while repeating its objections to compulsory health insurance, the association recognizes the need of properly safeguarded public funds, state and federal, to provide medical care for those who cannot pay. This is a coherent and constructive program; the A.M.A. may yet be brought to turn a favoring eye upon the other sound expedients in the field—group and contract practice.

Safely in Tax Exempts

IT WAS more than fifteen years ago that Andrew Mellon suggested the elimination of tax exemption as a feature of American government securities, but his suggestion produced no immediate action. Since the depression there has been an increasing sentiment against the continuance of this practise in governmental finance; last spring the President advised Congress that he favored a "short and simple statute" which would permit the federal government to tax securities henceforth to be issued by state and local governments and would confer on these a reciprocal authority with regard to federal securities. It has generally been felt that the Supreme Court would have completely to reverse previous decisions were it to declare such legislation constitutional, and opponents of the President, while approving the elimination of the principle of tax exemption, would have it done by constitutional amendment. In any case there is agreement that the change should be made, and the recent study on the subject made public by the Treasury Department in cooperation with the Bureau of the Census should strengthen sentiment for the change. The study singles out three main private groups of holders of such tax-exempt securities: banks (41 percent), insurance companies (about 14 percent) and wealthy individuals (over 10 percent, between five and six billion dollars). It further points out that the larger part of the securities owned by wealthy individuals are owned by the very wealthy. Apart from the additional revenue which the government might secure by taxing the tax exempts, such action might do something to make more reasonable the haven of liquidity which tax exempts offer the very rich, who alone among individuals can afford to invest at so slight a return. The removal of the tax exemption feature might likewise induce such wealthy men and women to invest somewhat more freely in badly needed new enterprises. To anti-New Dealers who hope that the taxing of government bonds will make necessary a higher interest rate and so discourage future lending-spending programs, it might be pointed out that British government securities never have been tax exempt (with minor exceptions) and that this lack of exemption seems to have had very little effect on interest rates.

Dynamite in Alabama

By HARRY SYLVESTER

THERE are twenty towns in Alabama that never saw a priest. In twenty of Alabama's sixty-seven counties there are only 225 Catholics and three churches. This is not India or the back country of China; this is the southern part of the United States. The traveling chapel of St. Teresa, contained in a trailer, and sponsored by the Central Missions of Alabama, has sixty-six missions throughout Alabama, sixty-two of them in towns, four of them in prisons.

Father Arthur W. Terminiello is one of the priests who have been making the tour of these missions for the years during which the traveling chapel has been in existence. When the rear doors of the trailer are opened, revealing a small but complete altar, you notice that the inside of one door has printed on it: "And behold I am with you all days." The other door has printed on it: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations."

Letting the ponderous and rhythmic periods of Scripture roll off one's tongue from an altar is one thing, and putting into practise the dynamite contained in the scriptural message is another. Some people do both. Father Terminiello is one of those people. When he saw people in Alabama being dropped right and left from Resettlement projects last year, he set to work to touch off some of the dynamite contained in Catholic teachings.

Something had to be found for them to do. Father Terminiello figured that it might just as well be something that had some promise of permanency, that might result in the establish-

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ment, even though on a small scale, of a new social order. Fortunately he had a far-seeing and liberal bishop, the Right Reverend Thomas J. Toolen of Mobile. Bishop Toolen lent his approbation to the contemplated work and Father Terminiello, who had been Rural Life Director for the diocese, went to work.

Near a railroad station—it is little more than one, literally—named Bolling he finally found a tract of good land and some crude houses. He bought 160 acres on mortgage and took a lease and option on 340 more acres. He then chose seven sharecropper families, six of them white, one of them colored, to live on the land and to work it. He set up his commissary in a corn crib and the management of the communal farm he gave to eighteen-year-old Dan Shaw.

Five families of the seven are in the cooperative which legally owns the farm. Each family has two acres to do its subsistence farming on, the rest of the farm is a commercial enterprise. What the families do not need to feed themselves they hope to sell locally and what they cannot sell or eat they hope to can, and eventually sell these canned goods to Catholic institutions.

Each family has its own chickens but all livestock is held in common. This spring the farm had six pigs, four mules, four cows, three calves, two steers and one bull. There is a community pasture of forty acres, and a pecan grove, also owned by the cooperative, comprises thirty-five acres.

The project was started by contributions and, it is suspected, by substantial aid from Bishop Toolen. It has been kept going by contributions, but this year there is every reason to believe that it will become self-supporting. The houses are scattered over an area of three miles, but Father Terminiello hopes to bring the families together in a small village and to start a fertilizer cooperative nearby.

At present the Sisters of Charity visit the small infirmary that has been built and they bring internes and nurses with them when necessary. Tuberculosis and Wasserman tests have been taken and it is hoped to maintain a free clinic at all times.

To date no financial aid has been accepted from the state, although the county agent tested the land for the cooperative and the Board of Health doctor took the tuberculosis tests. There has been no federal aid. Father Terminiello has his offices in the town hall of the nearby town of Greenville, but he lives right on the farm with the families of the cooperative, although he has his own separate house.

The plan is to cultivate 120 acres this year, to increase the area under cultivation each year and, as circumstances permit, to bring more people into the cooperative and to start similar cooperatives throughout the state of Alabama.

The project is called St. Teresa's Village and is under the patronage of the Little Flower. It is founded and operated on the Catholic principles of social justice. These principles, of course, teach that the very least a man can expect is enough to eat and a place to live, for himself and his family. The sharecroppers in St. Teresa's Village are working for no one but themselves. If they cannot sell what they are raising, they can at least eat it, which is more than an unemployed automobile worker can do with spare parts when he is out of a job.

They have quite literally returned to the land in that they are not primarily interested in raising a so-called "money-crop" of tobacco, corn or cotton, that curse of the South. They are out, like the Pennsylvania Dutch farmers, to make their living from the land and to buy as little as possible. If they can sell some of what they raise they will, but principally they are interested in feeding their children from the land and keeping a roof over their head from the stands of trees around them. Both of which things are more than most of them have had through most of their lives.

Father Terminiello is an ideal man to have controlling this project. Born near Boston, he attended Boston College and St. Mary's Seminary. After three years of parish work in the South he was assigned to the Central Missions and his assignment has been connected with missionary work ever since, in some connection. He knows how desperate the plight of the sharecropper is, for he has taken his trailer-chapel over almost impassable roads and preached Christianity to people who, through no fault of their own, are worse off than animals, for animals at least have enough to eat.

Father Terminiello knows that if the Church does not help these people, probably no one else will, for most of them, being illiterate, cannot vote and thus influence politicians, nor are they yet worthy of the attentions of the communists, who principally work with organized, literate individuals in key industries, since the communist practises the Works of Mercy with an impure intention, using them not as a means of charity but as a means of proselytizing.

It is a desperate work Father Terminiello is doing, at Bolling, Alabama, since he has to overcome the inertia of generations-old indifference, of prejudice to the Catholic Church, of financial difficulties. Like Father Drolet of Houma, Louisiana, and half a dozen other priests throughout the country, he knows that measures must be taken to definitely show the poor man that his fight is the Church's fight. It is a work needing our prayers and our financial support.

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The Revolt against God

By E. I. WATKIN

THIS is the stark, the terrible fact of our day — man's revolt against His Maker. In a sense, of course, he has been a rebel since the beginning of his history. But never before has there been a direct revolt against God by vast masses of human beings. In the remote prehistory of the stone age man practised religion. The most primitive surviving peoples are religious.

It has been reserved for this present age of civilized man to reject in vast and increasing numbers all religious faith and believe in nothing higher than mankind. The Soviet Union, representing some 160,000,000 people, is officially atheist. The new Germany, while retaining a verbal belief in God, seems to understand by the Deity a vague cosmic force flowering in the Nordic race. Everywhere only a minority practises the public worship of God, though hitherto every race and people have possessed their public religious ceremonies. All the great cultures of the past have been religious cultures, dominated and inspired by religion. Even when the human ruler is deified it is in virtue of a special relationship claimed by him with some god or gods—often a physical relationship.

No. It is an insult to the pagan cultures of the past to compare them with modern civilization. Where in our cities are the shrines which met you at every turn in the cities of pagan antiquity? Where are the religious festivals celebrated by the entire population? And differences of belief among religious believers are not the chief cause of this social secularism. If they were, the entire population would worship somewhere, would observe some days of public worship. On the contrary even where the State is not hostile to religion, in most civilized countries the majority do not attend any place of worship. We cannot be deceived by talk of religion as a purely personal and inward affair. For it is certain that only a small minority maintain a genuine and earnest practise of personal religion without some form of public worship. There are no doubt many who experience the Divine Presence most powerfully among the beauties of nature. But unless they give expression to their faith in the God thus experienced by taking part in public worship, in the majority of cases their religion will degenerate into a vague religiosity, pantheist in tendency.

But, we are told, the conduct, above all the social attitude, of Christians has alienated the masses from Christianity. Whatever degree of truth there may be in the charge, the fault is certainly not new. When the oppressed serfs rose under Watt Tyler, and the King was willing to keep his pledge of emancipation, the Bishops joined with their lay compeers in refusing to give up their property rights. Certainly these rebels murdered one particularly obnoxious Archbishop. But they did not, like the Spanish Reds, massacre the clergy en masse; profane, destroy or close the churches. The contrast measures the gulf between the oppressed but religious proletariat of the past and the less cruelly oppressed but unbelieving proletariat of today. If men believe rightly or wrongly that the official representatives of a particular religion are allied with their oppressors and are using religion to cloak and sanctify the oppression, it is only natural that they should become anticlerical. Moreover, though illogical, it is not altogether surprising if they confuse that particular religion with its unworthy representatives and reject it. But that they should reject *all* religion and deny God because their fellow man is unjust—this hideous perversion of right and flagrant denial of common sense has been reserved for our age.

Moreover, these atheistic rebels profess their Communist faith in a future society of men just and upright without God. That is to say, man has proved so unjust that only a bloody revolution can free us from his oppression. Therefore there is no God, no being higher than man, and this same humanity will—if we win the fight—be transformed from an evil into a good being. Always, man, man, man—man somehow to be self-sufficient, divine in his own right. Twenty years ago this claimant to divinity abused the control of natural forces he had achieved through applied science to tear himself to pieces. Today he is preparing to do the same thing on an even more colossal scale. Yet he is even more sure that he does not need any God, that he can be his own god. The very idea of worship is widely scoffed at as servile flattery. And this by those prepared to give all they have and are in the service of some human leader or group. Idols: Fascism, National Socialism, Communism, Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin—these they will worship and no sacrifice is too costly to offer. But the Infinite and Almighty Creator—to worship Him would be to degrade their human dignity.

We cannot, of course, judge the guilt of individual atheists. Vast numbers are the innocent victims of an invincible ignorance for which others are responsible. But the atheistic movement as such is plainly inspired by a pride which is diabolic, belief in the self-sufficiency of man, because he has

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learned to a large extent how to control physical forces, though he remains woefully incapable of controlling himself. In the early days of his revolt, when it was confined to an intellectual aristocracy, man deified his reason. Today it is his will, the social will of a society and the individual will of a leader in which the individual puts his trust.

If in fact religion were untrue, if there were no Creator, no Wisdom and no Love at the heart of reality, if man were indeed the product and plaything of blind unintelligent forces, and his doom—individual and racial—were complete annihilation, then he ought to be plunged in the profoundest gloom. He ought not to bring children into such a world of futility and pointless suffering, whose happiness, such as it is, passes so swiftly. I have heard of a nurse who had to nurse back into life a man doomed to the scaffold. It was a terrible task. If there were no God and no survival of death, every midwife would be doing what she did. But the modern atheist or agnostic does not despair, does not grieve. On the contrary he rejoices in his discovery that the world and man are the meaningless effect of the unmeaning, that human life and endeavor are futile. It is exhilarating, emancipating, rejuvenating, to know that in the last resort nothing is significant, nothing permanent, that everything came from blind force and will be resolved into nonentity. He scorns as poor benighted fools those who hold that the effect cannot exceed its cause, that chance cannot produce design, the irrational give birth to intelligence, force to love.

A series of books reissued to attack religion styles itself the "Thinker's Library." That is to say, if you hold that thought is simply a peculiarly complicated form of unintelligent force but nevertheless gives knowledge of truth and rational guidance you are a thinker. If on the contrary you hold that since thought gives knowledge of truth and rational guidance it must arise in a universal ultimately rational and be the product of intelligence you are not a thinker but an unintelligent obscurantist. Probably you are subconsciously putting forward this absurdity to cover and defend some ignoble motive, e. g., the defense of a corrupt capitalism, or to compensate for an inferiority complex or substitute for repressed sex instinct.

Such blatant denial, as though it were self-evident, of the fundamental laws of thought requires explaining. So does the triumphant joy with which men proclaim their own futility, mortality and irredeemable suffering. The explanation is pride.

Let man be the product and ultimately the victim of blind subhuman forces. Let his intelligence be the illusory manifestation of the unintelligent. Let his purpose and achievements be all mortal, his life a lightning flash in the dark immensities. Let him be alone in a universe which, though he can up to a point compel it to his will, will wipe him out individually tomorrow, racially in a period infinitesimal by comparison with astronomic or even geological time. Let him be a puppet compelled to do whatever he does—be the compulsion to die for his friend or to murder him. Still he has no overlord. He can play at being master of his fate. He can do what he wills though he cannot help willing what he wills. Having eaten of the tree of knowledge his eyes are open, though but to his own nakedness. He is as god and will make his own Eden, be it of the Communist or National Socialist variety. He has no need to eat of the tree of life, for he refuses to think about death. He will intoxicate himself with activity, either for some social cause, or more ignobly, in a whirl of pleasure or in the unremitting pressure of private business. To be quiet would reveal the underlying emptiness; to be alone, his human loneliness in a mechanical universe. On with the dance, on with it till you drop out into nothingness. And if the dance palls, on with the war—the class war, the national war—till you are blown or gassed into oblivion. But one thing you must never do, never worship. That is grovelling humiliation, that is bigotry, that is weakness. To acknowledge one's essential dependence on another, that is unworthy cowardice.

But, it may be argued, it is the problem of evil which has destroyed faith in a good and almighty God. It may be that in its aspect of innocent suffering modern man is more sensitive to the problem of evil than his, in some respects, thicker-skinned ancestors, who therefore glossed too lightly over this undeniable difficulty to religious faith. (But when it comes to the point, he is ready to inflict such suffering on an unprecedented scale. Our ancestors would not use poisoned arrows, our humanitarians are ready to use poisoned gas.)

Nor do these sceptics ask themselves how the problem of *good* can be solved without God. And evil of its nature is secondary and parasitic on good, so that the problem of good which the theist can solve is primary. The problem of evil is in fact a difficulty against God's providence. Here again the pride of the modern unbeliever intervenes. Because he has rightly refused to trust where it is unreasonable to take things on trust, namely in the scientific investigation of being at most no higher than himself, he will not trust where trust is reasonable and necessary, in the reference to the Being infinitely superior to himself. But then of course the modern secularist is incapable of conceiving any being superior to man. Moreover, he is blind even to the problem of evil in its deepest aspect, the problem of sin. Though ready enough to denounce his fellows en bloc as scoundrels, because they are bourgeois, or Jews,

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or whatever category of human devil he requires to feed the superiority complex of his herd, and therefore of himself as its member, he laughs at the notion of sin.

Increasingly during these last centuries man has turned away from the vertical aspect of reality, from the heights and depths of being, while immeasurably extending his vision along the horizontal level. On that level he can see no being higher than himself. For in fact, so far as our means of information reach, there is none. Hence a pride of lonely preeminence. And that pride in turn has encouraged him to confine his gaze to this broad plane of comparatively superficial reality and avert it more firmly from the height and depth. When he does explore his own soul he is mostly content to scrutinize the biological levels where the sexual instinct or the instinct for power hold sway.

Because we English-speaking peoples have hitherto avoided the gross manifestations of this proud revolt against God, do not slaughter clergy, close or demolish churches, or even inflict petty persecutions on religious believers, we are guilty of another form of it, less unpleasant to believers and less crude but in one aspect even more blasphemous. We ignore God. When our politicians consider what attitude to adopt toward the civil war in Spain they consider only our political and commercial interests. At best there is a dash of a none too costly or dangerous humanitarianism. But we do not dream of taking into account the religious attitude of the warring parties: the fact that one party, whatever its faults—and Heaven knows they are grave—does not seek to destroy but to defend religion, whereas the other is set upon rooting it out. We even have deans who after singing in their cathedrals the Psalms which call upon God to vindicate His cause against the blaspheming and persecuting foe, hasten to champion the cause of these very blasphemers and persecutors. At least we have them in England. For a generation the Mexican government has striven to root out religion by every form of persecution. Not a protest from the British or American governments. But when the Mexican President, not satisfied with the peccadillo of persecuting religion, dares to lay sacrilegious hands on the property of the oil companies, protest is loud.

The contemptuous neglect of God as irrelevant by the capitalist democracies may well be just as irreligious fundamentally as the open hatred of God displayed by the Communists.

The average atheist or agnostic has not dispassionately considered the arguments for theism, whether the philosophical proofs or the evidence of a world-wide religious experience. He dogmatically asserts that the former are worthless and tries to explain the latter away as a disguised sex or power complex, infantilism, atavism, even hysteria. You may patiently answer his criticisms and explanations. He is not really listening.

So forward go the soldiers of the Brave New Worlds to internecine slaughter for the privilege of establishing the kingdom of godless humanity, of man deified. Before they reach it they will have turned the world into a slaughter-house for the greater glory of Communist or National Socialist man. In the end, however, they may achieve—in fact, I somehow think they will achieve—not certainly their godless Eden, but a godless world order. But however externally prosperous, secure and peaceful, it will be empty within. Only when the realization of his own nothingness and the futility of a life confined to the human and purely natural sphere have pulled down his humanist pride and brought him back to the feet of God can the external achievement of such a world order and the wealth of its powers and possessions derived from the applied sciences be employed as material of God's Kingdom in man.

In the meanwhile, if the minority who have not joined the revolt against God are to hold fast, we must deepen the essential religious attitude of adoration. The Catholic Church in her liturgy, above all in the Sacrifice of the Mass, provides an adoration worthy of God because it is not simply man's worship but the worship of God Himself, incarnate in His natural and His social body. Our reply to the contemptuous pity or angry hostility of the godless must be to adhere with our entire will to this Divine-human worship, to ask God to let us enter into it and be, as it were, assumed by it. Outwardly such an attitude is best expressed, preserved and strengthened by vocal participation in the liturgy, by joining in the official words of the Church's praise. Primarily this will be to use the words of the Missal, by singing or saying those portions intended to be sung or said by the laity, as they offer the Holy Sacrifice through its official and indispensable minister, the priest. But there is also the Divine Office. What magnificent praise there is here. No arguments can penetrate the pridebound self-satisfaction of modern secularism. Adoration can and will overthrow it.

It is no doubt important and valuable to show the world that the Church is not indifferent to man's earthly lot, to bring before the public her principles of social and economic justice. But this must never be regarded or made to appear as her primary and essential office. If the Church were primarily an organization to assist men to lead a happier healthier or even more moral life on earth, secularism could adopt her program while dropping the religion as superfluous. Fascism has in fact adopted the Catholic scheme of the corporative society and divested it of its Christian presuppositions and setting. First and foremost the Church must be seen as the society

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of true adorers adoring God in spirit and truth, because it is inspired by His Spirit and enlightened by His Truth. The elevating and aspiring humility of Christian worship flies aloft when the groveling pride of those who repeat Lucifer's slogan of revolt, "I will not serve," lies prone on the ground.

Therefore let us oppose revolt with service; the blasphemy with praise; pride with the humility of worship. Let us not be discouraged if the number of worshipers is few by comparison with the rebel hosts, and becomes fewer still. It is God's way to assert His Majesty through the few, the weak and the defeated. The greatest act of praise and the most triumphant was the shame and the apparent defeat of the Cross. By praise we annihilate ourselves before the Adorable Mystery in the comparative emptiness of our created being and that emptiness is filled with the Divine Fullness. All things created are denied and rejected in themselves, in their lack of being apart from God; they are to be reaffirmed in their positive being, their relation to Him. We and they are thus anchored in God's eternity: we in our souls, they in their significance and positive worth. The secularist clutches at the surface of things and affirms himself as a temporal being. They slip from his grasp, being but shadows; he is doomed to frustration. The substance of things, the fulfilment of ourselves, are in God and only in and from Him can they be attained. Therefore praise, with all that praise implies of unreserved self-donation to God, undivided adherence to Him. True, only in heaven will the donation and the adherence be complete. For there alone is praise perfected. But even here God enables us to praise Him sufficiently to overcome an apostate civilization by our affirmation of His victory and share in it.

Indeed, as we have seen, objectively we can praise Him perfectly even now. For we can offer the praise of Christ in the Holy Mass. A vast revival of liturgical praise within the Church would be the triumphant advance of an irresistible army against the kingdoms of a godless world. Where argument and preaching pass unheeded, praise will carry the citadel of Anti-Christ, as the praise of Joshua's trumpeters felled the walls of Jericho. But it must be praise with the entire being, body, mind and will. The modern revolt against God can no more be successful than the first, the revolt of the rebel angels. We must not deny it, minimize it, ignore it or be dismayed by it. We must face it in its full extent and face it confidently, secure in the might of God, armed with invincible praise.

Pigs and Cream

By TAD ECKAM

THE CHAIN of lakes in Wisconsin has been called the "Killarneys of America," and whether or not they have been aptly named I have never been able to find out. For several summers I have hiked about the countryside and rowed through the twenty-three lakes and waded along parts of the fifty miles of lake shore. All of this traveling I have done, of course, with the prime purpose of enjoying one of the loveliest vacation spots in the land. But the secondary purpose has always been somewhere in back of my mind, and that is to discover the man who has actually seen the Killarneys of Ireland and who could authoritatively state on first-hand information that these lakes are comparable with those in the old country.

But the man cannot be found. So I have dropped the whole scheme of research and now I hike and row and wade about the vicinity with another purpose. Almost immediately did I reach results, and they have not to do with fish—anyone can find fish in these lakes—but with pigs and cream and several similar things.

News has been going the rounds for many years that fabled Scandinavia has been born anew among the lakes and woods of Wisconsin, and here, I thought, was news that was a fit tidbit for a research student unable to nail down the rumor of the Killarneys. Why not dig into the locality to find out what of Scandinavia has come to roost here? Why not sift the talk of American Cooperators to learn to what extent consuming and marketing cooperation has spread among the Scandinavian settlers and their descendants? And the answers to these questions brought me, born and bred just off the city sidewalks, close to the cooperative method of handling pigs and cream (and several similar things) in rural Wisconsin.

They said that everybody belongs to some sort of cooperative in this part of the country, but like everything that "they say" this report turned out to be not quite accurate. In fact it fell far short of the mark which accuracy attempts to approach. The natives hereabouts know that there are cooperatives and that some member, or members, of their families belong to them, but it is pretty hard to find members who know nearly as much about the cooperative scheme as do most of the students of cooperative theory. This one item is certain, however, and it is that there exist many

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business enterprises going under the title of "co-operative" and adhering more or less to the original principles laid down by the Rochdale pioneers of the last century.

Two of these enterprises, I think, will suffice to demonstrate the tenacity of the cooperative idea, will serve to bear out a degree of the things "they said," and will help to justify the title of my present thesis in research. The one is a cooperative produce company and the other a co-operative creamery, the first handling mainly pigs, calves and cattle and also potatoes, the second handling cream, milk and milk products. Both of them are marketing cooperatives, that is, headquarters where the local farmers cooperate in pooling their commodities to be sold for their own greater benefit.

Being myself a theoretician in quest of the practical I decided to match my book knowledge of the scheme with the actual working out of farmers' cooperation. The idealism of a humanitarian is supposed to course deeply in the make-up of individual cooperators. They want to start co-operatives, belong to them and work for them because of their deep-rooted desire to assist struggling fellow men while at the same time they are helping themselves. The manager of the creamery did not quite get the drift of my probing on this idealistic spirit. He got into this cooperative in 1911 because the business was not doing so well at that time under his management, and because the newly organized group of farmers were going to start their cooperative business as his competitors. He saw the unwisdom of having two creameries in the same town, so he merely shifted over to them, was appointed manager, and has been at it ever since.

The manager of the produce cooperative likewise registered a blank expression in answer to my breathless queries about cooperative idealism. "Hell," said he, "I'm in this business to support my wife and kids." And for that reason he was anxious to make a success of it. It was a good thing for the farmers too, he granted. The business was begun in 1905; he started as a worker in the warehouse in 1916, became book-keeper in 1924, and manager in 1932. The original members were all for potatoes, but potatoes have gone out in Wisconsin since that time and livestock is now the big thing. In 1905 a farmer would drive his load of potatoes down the main street of town and find as many as thirteen buyers ready to bid on them for the Chicago companies they represented. There was no such thing as a stable price. The farmer may get a good price and he may get a poor one. All was confusion on the selling end, and the humanitarianism that started this co-operative was a decision to form a central station to handle potatoes.

I would not do the injustice of suggesting that this unidealistic spirit is the common one among all cooperators. I am merely writing down the findings of practical results in a very limited field of cooperative endeavor. Perhaps these men are aglow with it, but in a secondary way. Undoubtedly the wide reaches of the cooperative movement in this and other countries contain many men and women who enter the enterprise mainly from a humanitarian spirit. Anyway, it is hardly necessary to be an idealist to make a success of the scheme. A group can be almost as self-centered as an individual, and the charity which begins at home can well extend itself into the homes of neighboring farmers.

Idealism being thus disposed of in the cooperative handling of pigs and cream, the next important question is that of membership and stock-holding. The original intention in both types was to limit membership to persons actively engaged in farming, but intentions at times have a way of missing their objectives. The creamery, because of the peculiar circumstances of its inception, was made up of farmers and merchants in about equal numbers. The tendency, of course, has been to let out the merchants and let in the farmers, but after twenty-seven years of business the proportion is only 60 percent farmers and 40 percent merchants. In the produce cooperative the opposite tendency seems to be in vogue. Glancing through the original by-laws of 1905 I noted that only farmers could hold stock in the business; the shares were void if held by others. But the thirty-three years since that section was written into the by-laws have brought death to many of the founding farmers, have seen a change of occupation among the descendants who inherited the stock, and as a result the membership in the produce co-operative is now predominantly of non-farmers.

Almost any casual vacationist in these parts would ask: What difference does it make who the members are so long as their investment provides the necessary capital, and as long as the farmers get the benefits? The difference is just this: The voting power slips out of the hands of the farmers as a group, and important decisions may be carried in favor of investing-members rather than of farming-members. And this is precisely what happened in these two Wisconsin cooperatives.

You see, one of the principles of the Rochdale Plan is that the savings of the cooperative (called "profits" in private business) must be returned to the members in the form of patronage rebates, proportioned to the amount of business each member has done through the cooperative. Now this rebate is voted upon by the members at the annual, or semi-annual, meeting and it is natural that the farmer-members should desire as large a portion of the savings as they can get. It is their business and they deserve to receive the savings. But in the actual practise here this theoretical

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principle has failed to function. The investing-members, that is, merchants and other non-farmers, have always succeeded in having the savings distributed as dividends in proportion to their stock investment. Thus is deflated my naive faith in another "iron-bound" principle of co-operation. It turns out, in this instance, to be an investment business and not a savings association. In good years the members voted themselves an 8 percent dividend, in poorer years 6 and 4 per-cent. In the depth of the depression there were no dividends, but neither was there a loss.

I must cut down on the other cooperative principles in practise here if I expect to find space in THE COMMONWEAL for this vacation report. Another parenthetical note is this: I am personally sold on the cooperative idea and it is not my present purpose to show that the thing does not work in practise. It can and does work, but with full success only where the principles of the Rochdale Plan are put rigorously into practise.

The one principle that is strictly adhered to in the handling of pigs and cream (and several similar things) is the important limitation of "one member, one vote." No matter what other variations are introduced and what other principles are allowed to go by the board, each member is permitted only one vote in the general annual or semi-annual meetings. Strictly speaking there is supposed to be a limit to the number of shares that an individual member may purchase. In the produce cooperative the limit is set at twenty; in the creamery there is no limit, and several members own as many as thirty shares. In both co-operatives these shares are sold at a par value of $10, and may be transferred to another person only upon the issuance of a new certificate to the new owner by the cooperative. Regardless of the number of shares owned by any individual member he is permitted only one vote. In other incorporated enterprises there is a vote for each share of stock owned.

The voting in these cooperatives is pretty much a thing of rote. The disposal of the business savings seem to be of most importance. Then there is the matter of plant expansion and the maintenance of a sinking fund which are voted on yearly. Finally, there is great interest in the election of officers: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and a board of directors. In the creamery cooperative there are seven, and in the produce cooperative five directors, who meet monthly, and each of whom receives the munificent sum of $2 per meeting. The voting power of members practically stops there. All routine business and expenditures are voted upon by the directors, who in turn advise the manager of their decisions.

This seems like a lot of bosses for the poor cooperative manager to obey. But they are not all. The managers in both places told me that practically all of the farmer-members contribute unending suggestions regarding the management of the business. "We are supposed," said the manager of live stock, "to work ten hours a day, six days a week, but the farmers work all hours every day and they really expect us to do the same. And we do pretty much that." The manager and most of the employees are members of the co-operative, and in a sense they are their own bosses since the business is their own business. But the whole problem of personnel reminds me of a sand-lot ball team where the bat is owned by one player, the ball by another, the mask by a third, and the giving and taking of orders does not proceed smoothly and effectively. The result is not precisely chaotic, but there is, I think, a tendency to prevent the whole scheme from reaching any high degree of efficiency among the employees.

Let me not suggest that cooperators are not loyal to the whole idea or to each other. On the contrary there is something distinctive about them in this regard. They will defend cooperation in any and every discussion with an outsider. There is in them a family spirit, and with it goes the hospitality and kindness that are traditional in a well-knit family. All feuds and disagreements are internal and passing. Only a cooperator would pull out the books of his business, the by-laws and minutes of meetings, and give hours of his time to answering personal questions from a complete stranger. And that is much for a vacationist to appreciate. If nothing else, they have made it possible to fulfil the secondary purpose of my roaming by explaining how local Scandinavians handle pigs and cream (and several similar things).

Contrition

Never to me the even sunlight,
Never to me!
Always a sun-bar striking
My cold, unwilling sea!

Let it be visible, the penance,
The summoned draught;
Let me not strive to parry
The justice of that shaft!

Caught upward in this fiery levy,
My laggard rue
In glittering suspension
Will globe as rain or dew.

After the slow, tremendous pardon
It will receive the sun
And in that hot communion
Will find its salt has gone.

EILEEN DUGGAN.

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Divided Ireland

By F. A. HERMENS

IT HAS been said that the dead rule over the living. Often this means that the antagonisms rather than the friendly relations of the past affect the policies of the present. Thus it is that men who could easily come together if they could calmly consider their problems as they are now, are prevented from doing so. The memory of the past rises before their eyes, which then are closed to all reason. The fight goes on, and new wrongs are added to the old ones.

Irish partition is a good example of this. The historic facts which at the present keep Ireland divided into two parts go back for centuries. English colonization was more successful in parts of the province of Ulster than it was in the remainder of Ireland. Untold hardships accompanied the planting of these settlements, yet by now the people of Irish and of English or Scotch descent have been staying together for so long that a peaceful coexistence should be the natural thing. Actually there has been a time—roughly speaking between the American Revolutionary War and the abolition of the Irish Parliament in 1801—when feeling was friendly and when all the inhabitants of the province of Ulster felt that all those who lived on Irish soil would do well to stick together, since the things they had in common were more important than those which separated them.

New controversies, however, arose during the nineteenth century, in particular during its last quarter. Ireland was imperatively demanding her independence, and since little headway could be made by the employment of peaceful means only, more drastic means of pressure were adopted. Many of the Protestants in the North regarded such acts of violence as occurred in the South to be directed against themselves; they did not realize that the reason for violent outbreaks would disappear as soon as a just settlement of the Irish claims was arranged, and that apart from that, acts of violence had been directed against the British and against the landlord, and never against the Protestant settlers as such.

Nevertheless, when in 1886 Gladstone introduced a bill into the British Parliament which provided Home Rule for the whole of Ireland with a Parliament in Dublin, for a short while a solution of all difficulties seemed possible. The plan proposed by Gladstone was simple, and as is the case with most simple plans it would have worked out better than any of a more complicated nature. Parnell, the Irish leader, welcomed it joyfully, and said: "This bill will, I think, be cheerfully accepted by the Irish people and their representatives as a solution of the long-standing dispute between the two countries, and . . . will lead to the prosperity and peace of Ireland and the satisfaction of England." However, Gladstone obtained no majority for his policies. A similar bill was blocked in the House of Lords in 1893; Home Rule did not become law until 1914 and was put into effect only on the basis of the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, which provided for a separation of the six counties of the Northeast from the remainder of the country.

Since 1885 the Irish struggle for independence has been to an increasing extent misunderstood by the Protestants in the North, who feared for their personal safety if government authority was transferred to a Parliament in Dublin. Some of these fears, no matter how ill-founded, were genuine. Others were artificially and purposely created in the course of partizan struggle. For once, the British Conservative party was dominated by its extremists. Home Rule had been proposed by a Liberal government. That the Conservatives opposed it, corresponded, no matter how short-sighted this policy was, to the normal play of British politics. However, the Conservatives violated the rules of the game when they made the Northern Irish Protestants a pawn in their political maneuvers and did not care about the methods employed.

The Conservatives knew that there was a feeling of uneasiness in the Protestant parts of Ulster; they realized that if this could be stirred to the point approaching actual revolution, then the will of the Liberal government might be frustrated, irrespective of the parliamentary majority behind it. The first signal for such a policy was given by Lord Randolph Churchill who coined the phrase, "Ulster will fight; Ulster will be right." Nothing characterizes the situation better than the sequence of the two parts of this phrase; Ulster is not to fight because it is right, but it is right because it is ready to fight. This appeal effectively stirred up the passions among the Protestants in Ulster, among whom ever since a militant mood has prevailed.

This development came to a head when in 1917 the Liberal government in England had broken the resistance of the House of Lords and was able to take serious steps in the direction of granting Home Rule. Sir Edward Carson assumed the leadership of the Protestants in the Northeast of Ireland. Regiments were enrolled and drilled, arms landed and distributed. A private army had been set up for the first time in modern Europe!

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The outbreak of the World War had prevented actual rioting, but when in 1920 Home Rule was granted, Partition accompanied it. The Unionists had their will with regard to the way in which it was carried out; they wanted their statelet as large as possible and yet with a safe majority of its own. Thus three of the nine counties of the historic Irish Province of Ulster were excluded and allowed to join the Free State, but the counties of Fermanagh and Tyrone which had a Catholic majority were brought under the domination of the government set up in Belfast.

As the government of the six counties was constructed, it could not work to full satisfaction. Two-thirds of the people were Protestants, and one-third Catholics. Practically all of the Protestants, who are about equally divided into Anglicans and Presbyterians, voted for the Unionists and the Catholics for the Nationalists. This means that the Unionist party will always be in the majority and the Nationalists always in the minority. Such a development is a severe strain on the political life of the country. Party government is at its best only if the minority party has a hope that some time it will become a majority itself. A permanent minority is never wholesome, and conditions are bound to become intolerable if there exists a deep antagonism between majority and minority and if the government becomes a tool in the hands of the majority and is no longer willing to exert its functions impartially. This is what happened in Northern Ireland. Lord Craigavon's Unionist government has been in office since 1921. Thus the Northern Irish Premier, so far as tenure of office is concerned, exceeds even Mussolini's record by more than a year. In other respects he may not do quite as well as the Italian dictator, but the similarity of the conditions prevailing in the two countries is obvious.

The situation in Northern Ireland can indeed be understood only by comparing it with that prevailing in the totalitarian states. There exists a Special Powers Act which allows the executive government to assume the functions of the legislative and to do almost anything it pleases. Persons may be detained or interned for an indefinite period without trial. Whereas in all civilized countries the burden of proof that a man is guilty rests upon the State, in Ireland this relationship is reversed; the defendant is considered guilty until he has proved the opposite. Private tribunals, under partizan influence, may question in secret anybody they want. Arrest is possible without warrant and upon the mere suspicion of an offense having been committed. To round out the picture, there exists a special police, the "B Specials," which consists of faithful Unionists, and against which Protestants who disagree with the government have brought the charge of their having been used for electoral purposes. The police may assign to a person a certain part of the six counties where he has to stay, irrespective of where his family is living and where his business associations are located.

These measures bear heavily on the Catholic minority, against which they are almost exclusively applied. And further, they are supplemented by an economic boycott. Lord Craigavon has said that in the six counties he wants "a Protestant Parliament for a Protestant People." In accordance with this, employment is denied to Catholics in the public service whenever possible, and pressure is brought to bear upon private business not to employ Catholics when it can be avoided. As a result, the situation is hopeless for a Catholic whenever he wants to become more than a common laborer. The natural consequence is that many of the promising members of the young generation emigrate and the ranks from which suitable Catholic leadership could be recruited are thereby thinned. Further, riots directed indiscriminately against all Catholics have repeatedly occurred after the celebration of July 12—when Protestants commemorate the battle of the Boyne, in which the Protestant William of Orange was victorious over the Catholic, James II. On such occasions the police is anything but impartial.

What can be done about the situation? If the memory of the past could be wiped out, a thoroughgoing solution would be simple. The six counties could join the remaining twenty-six in a united Ireland, in the framework of which they could retain their self-government. This would solve the two tasks for which the Belfast government is supposed to exist—guaranteeing the rights of the Protestants, and keeping at least part of Ireland in connection with the British Empire—better than the present set-up. Irish Catholics are not intolerant of the Protestants; many of their leaders, like Parnell, were Protestants, and so is Dr. Hyde, their first President. In the Irish Civil Service no door is closed against the Protestants, who actually occupy more positions than would correspond to their percentage of the total population. Further, if the 800,000 Protestants of the North would join the 200,000 Protestants of the South, then the Protestants would form the balancing vote between the two major parties in Ireland, both of which would then have to comply with their wishes. The same applies to the question of providing a link between Ireland and the British Commonwealth of Nations. In a United Ireland there would undoubtedly be a strong majority in favor of continued membership in the Empire which, therefore, instead of losing six counties, which are a moral as well as a financial liability anyway, would gain the permanent loyalty of all the thirty-two counties of the island.

The memory of the past being as strong as it is, this solution, which is as simple as it is organic,

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is not possible for a long time to come. Nevertheless, it should be possible to induce the government of Northern Ireland to alter its policy with regard to its minority. The Unionists have defended the arbitrary power given to their Special Powers Act as a result of the conditions of 1922 and the continued existence of revolutionary groups. However, the situation is different now from what it was in 1922, and a government which could not now maintain law and order by normal means would only prove that it is incapable of fulfilling its functions.

On the other hand, if fairness is established in the relations between the denominations in Northern Ireland, then partizan passions will subside; the Protestants in the North will then be able to view the situation in its true light and this will go a long way toward dispelling their fear of the Catholics and their reluctance to join the remainder of the country.

But as conditions are now, only outside pressure can bring about a modified attitude on the part of the Belfast government. The extremists among the Unionists are, consciously or not, aware of the fact that a normalization of conditions would threaten their continuation in power, and thus they do nothing to mitigate existing frictions. Not so long ago Lord Craigavon made the significant statement that there were not enough drums in Belfast—drums, of course, which are inseparable from the picture of a crowd of partizans parading in order to provoke their opponents. Belfast was probably the only place in the world where such a complaint was taken seriously; in most other cities it would have evoked hilarity.

The beat of drums may, however, sound less agreeable in London than it does in Belfast. The English know that for their foreign policy they need the moral support of public opinion in the democratic nations, in particular the United States. They can gain this support only if they solve those problems for the creation of which they are themselves responsible. It is praiseworthy if they can through their statesmen help foreign countries solve their difficulties, as recently they sent Lord Runciman to Prague to mediate between the Czechs and the Sudeten Germans. But instead of traveling so far, Lord Runciman might well have performed the duties of mediator across the Irish Sea, in Belfast.

In this connection one more remark must be made. The Government of Ireland Act of 1920 had imposed proportionate representation upon the six as well as upon the twenty-six counties. The six have abolished it, and it is said this has inflicted additional sufferings upon the Nationalist minority. Actually, the number of seats held by the Catholics in a Parliament of fifty-two has, in the first two elections held under the majority system, been reduced merely from twelve to eleven. In 1938 the Catholics had only eight seats—but simply because they boycotted elections in three constituencies where they held a safe majority, thereby illustrating how little they value the possession of seats in a Parliament where they are due to be a minority irrespective of which electoral system is applied.

On the other hand it is true that after the abolition of proportionate representation in local government, which occurred in 1922, electoral districts have been so gerrymandered in the counties of Fermanagh and Tyrone and in the city of Derry that the Nationalists there lost the majority they held before. But the remedy against gerrymandering is not proportionate representation but fair apportionment, which would give the Nationalists all they want. Fair apportionment can be demanded in the name of justice; but if the demand for proportionate representation is raised again, it would only help the Unionist government to sidetrack the issue, because the leading members of the Belfast Cabinet are well aware of the inherent weakness in the agitation of proportionate representation and would like nothing better than to demonstrate their superior knowledge of the matter in another controversy.

Finally, it is obvious that Partition will not end unless the Irish in the twenty-six counties demand that it be ended. They can demand it with the required vigor only if they have a "strong and stable government" which can act for them. They will not in the long run have such a government if they keep proportionate representation. To be sure, after the recent election De Valera obtained a majority of sixteen over all his opponents in the Dail. But this feat could be accomplished only after the leader of Fianna Fail had done what has rarely been equaled. By his treaty with England he realized his own program and the program of the opposition too. Thus he had all the trump cards and Mr. Cosgrave had none. However, even the prestige won by such a victory will wear out. The question of the relations with England which tended to divide the voters into two parties being no longer as important as it was in the past, economic issues will from now on push to the forefront.

Parties arising on such a basis may easily divide Ireland in a manner more harmful than even Partition. In the statement issued before the last election Mr. De Valera made it clear that he was aware of these possibilities. Those who would not like the Irish people in the twenty-six counties to be partitioned along the lines of artificial party divisions—which would immerse them in so many domestic difficulties that they would no longer be able to make an effective demand for abolition of geographical partition—will agree with De Valera that an electoral system should be adopted which makes for unity rather than for division.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

PRINCE HUBERTUS LOEWENSTEIN is a young exile from Nazi Germany who recently told the public in his autobiography the exciting story of his personal struggle with the Nazi terror after he had broken away from the aristocratic circles into which he was born and espoused the cause of the Social Democratic republic which was destroyed by Hitler. Like many other militant champions of social democracy in Germany, Prince Loewenstein is a Catholic. Indeed, German Catholics, those who formerly were organized politically in the Center party, constituted one of the major supports of the German Republic. There were, however, many other German Catholics, particularly the aristocratic, wealthy and landholding classes, who were opposed to the democratic doctrine and actions of the Center party, and hoped and worked for its overthrow and for the restoration of the monarchy. Others, again, were sympathetic to the Nazi cause, even before its ultimate triumph, although this section of the German Catholics was a very small one. That Prince Loewenstein should carry on his struggle for democratic principles, and against Nazi principles, in his exile, by voice and by pen, is admirable, and his efforts to enlighten the world as to the true situation in Nazi Germany is deserving of close attention. It is, therefore, highly disquieting to find this prominent and influential German Catholic writing in the September number of the *Atlantic Monthly* a singularly shallow article dealing with the Catholic Church in its relations with world movements and world affairs, the effect of which is likely to be mischievous and thoroughly misleading, so far as the general public is concerned.

Instructed Catholics, however, are not likely to grant much competence to a critic of the Church who commits himself to such a view of that Church's struggle for its supremely necessary spiritual freedom from, and supremacy over, all forms of secular tyranny as does Prince Loewenstein in his comments upon the century-long combat of the Papacy with the German imperial dynasty of the Hohenstauffens. According to Prince Loewenstein, "The policy of the Church toward the legitimate government of Spain reminds us of the most tragic periods in the Church's history. Because of a misguided temporal policy, the medieval Popes fought continually against the legitimate rulers of Lombardy and Sicily, the Hohenstauffen emperors, and were in league with all anti-imperial rebels. In this struggle the Papacy remained victorious, but with the downfall of the Hohenstauffens began the downfall of Christian unity, the seeds for 'national churches' were sown, and ultimately the Protestant forces broke away from the Holy See."

This is topsy-turvy history with a vengeance! For if there is one point upon which representative Church historians are in agreement more than upon most others, it is in the verdict that what was at stake in the Church's battle with the Hohenstauffens was the spiritual liberty of the Church. The Hohenstauffens sought to revive the totalitarian supremacy of the ancient Roman emperors. The question of the right of such a totalitarian secular power to make and appoint and rule over not only the bishops of the Church but the Pope himself was the very crux of the combat. From Barbarossa (Frederick I: 1152-1189) to Manfred, defeated and slain at Benevento in 1266, the supreme struggle was waged. If it had not been won by the Papacy, there would have been an end of Catholicism in the world—for the universal Church cannot exist as the state-tool of the secular power. It is a curious paradox to find Prince Loewenstein, professing the most radical type of democracy, upholding the secular totalitarianism of the Hohenstauffens. But perhaps this is atavism, for I believe the fiery young "Red Prince" counts the Hohenstauffens among his ancestors.

However that may be, the same instinct to consider the Church as a useful tool or instrument of a particular secular policy, which operated with the Hohenstauffens, seems to be present in Prince Loewenstein. He carries his new-found democratic principles and his admirable desire for absolute social justice to the point where he would reduce Christianity's supreme meaning to a sort of secular Utopia, and so express its innermost essence. As a consequence of Christ's incarnation, he writes, "not only must individual freedom and full civil liberties be guaranteed by Christian society; not only must 'charity' be given to the poor; but true social justice must be established, granting to each and all a physical existence according to the dignity of human nature, as restored by Christ." Undoubtedly, such an ideal is desirable—and it is also possible: provided that mankind places first the ideal of the Kingdom of God, and His justice, to which, if attained, the "other things," all secular good things, will be granted. But Prince Loewenstein does the cause of social justice, as well as that of Catholicism, poor and misleading service, no matter how well-intentioned, by apparently following the socialistic ideal of the supremacy of temporal, secular interests. His plea for a "united front" of Catholics even with the Communists should be disregarded.

Communications

UKRAINE

Somerville, Mass.

TO the Editors: During the past few months several articles and reviews concerning Ukraine and phases of the Ukrainian question have appeared in the world press. Ukraine has so long been neglected by political observers and writers that most of us who are interested in world affairs welcomed these articles and read them eagerly and thoroughly. But I, at least, was most distressed to find practically all of these writers approaching their subject from a single angle, to find them completely disregarding what I believe to be the most pertinent factors in the situation, and to observe with awe that their views practically coincide with the insidiously detrimental Soviet propaganda about Ukraine.

Almost without exception these writers describe Ukraine

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as a desirable "southwestern Russian country" which is the particular object of Nazi scheming and upon which the covetous eyes of other European governments are constantly focused. That is precisely the view which Moscow has taken so much pains to impress upon the world. Personally I suspect that most of these foreign political observers and writers, who were caught napping when Der Fuehrer quickly, quietly and directly seized Austria, are now writing something about every Eastern European country as a possible ground for German expansion in the hope that they will thus be ready for Hitler's next move.

Be that as it may, the point is this: Their personal views on Ukraine and the Ukrainian question or on any other subject are not important, no matter how interesting or timely they may be. Neither are mine, or yours or anybody's. But the facts which these writers bring forth in support of their little theories, the facts which they distort or deliberately omit—ah, those are important. The reading public and that vastly larger section which does not read but which ultimately hears such articles discussed expects trained political observers and writers to be explicit and to tell the entire story in so far as they are able.

As I have pointed out, most of the writers on Ukraine treat it merely as a "southwestern Russian country." They do not explain that there are formidable numbers of Ukrainians in Poland, Rumania and Czechoslovakia, more than 4,000,000 in Poland alone. They very carefully omit to state that there are, all told, 50,000,000 Ukrainians, and that nearly one-quarter of these live outside the Soviet. Nowhere do they tell us that Ukraine is a national entity, that there is a definite and most articulate movement for freedom among the Ukrainian people, and that Ukraine is virtually an empire in itself and quite apart from its enforced connection with Moscow.

These writers seldom mention the fact—and it is significant—that Ukrainians form Europe's largest minority. It seems to me that such political observations and evaluation is decidedly detrimental. Certain it is that nothing would please Ukrainians more than to have their cause better understood, to have their problems studied separate from the plans and aspirations of other nations. Their problem is self-contained; it is not necessarily dependent upon the plans of any nation and ought not to be considered from that point alone. In many ways theirs is a problem similar to that which confronted us before our Revolutionary War. They are a people struggling for independence and the right of self-determination.

The struggle will continue—for how long none can say. But this can safely be said: The Ukrainians, in spite of their subjection by the Soviet and in spite of the shameful treatment they receive in other countries, or perhaps because of it, are definitely a factor when one considers the future of Europe. Fifty million people cannot forever be kept down. Ukraine will bear careful watching. In a general European mêlée, or even during a period of lesser trouble, this land will quite probably come to the fore—a nation of first-class importance.

BRENDAN A. FINN.

VIOLENCE IN LABOR RANKS

San Pedro, Calif.

TO the Editors: Having been a faithful reader of THE COMMONWEAL from its very beginning, I must confess that it has pained me greatly to have you ignore in your many discussions of the labor union problem the part that violence has played in the recruiting of workers to the ranks of various unions during the past few years.

You, yourselves, went to considerable lengths to condemn Franco for resorting to the sword to settle internal differences in Spain, when in your opinion he might have achieved his purpose by more peaceful means. Does not the same principle apply to the organization of labor in this country? If it does, then I fail to see how any fair-minded citizen can justify one worker beating up another worker, because the last worker refuses to view his problems in the same light as the first worker. And if that same citizen cannot justify such an act, then surely he must condemn it.

Two years ago I saw a low-slung paper truck, escorted by a squad of motorcycle police, draw up in front of an emergency hospital in Wilmington, California. It was filled with truck drivers, ten or twelve in all, who had been beaten up by union men. Streaming with blood and the greater part of them unconscious, they presented as terrible a sight as I ever witnessed on the Western Front during the World War. Fractured skulls, broken arms and legs was the punishment meted out to them for attempting to hold on to jobs they had held for many years in an effort to feed their wives and children. Today in Los Angeles the members of David Beck's "goon" squad are being tried for the reign of terror they inaugurated. That trial has not yet come to an end, but already five or six members of the squad have confessed to their part in the campaign of intimidation they participated in and their confessions make sickening reading for any fair-minded American.

In the light of those confessions, and they tell only part of a story that has been enacted over and over again in all parts of this country, doesn't it seem that we, here in the United States, are faced with a form of internecine warfare which, if allowed to continue, will ultimately destroy our vaunted democratic institutions? And to carry the discussion a step farther, what about the Catholic Church and the man who approves such violence as described above?

Unless labor is willing to achieve its aims by peaceful and dignified means and assume a sober responsibility for its acts and promises, then I am afraid whatever victory it achieves will be a barren one. Hatred and violence are the hallmarks of revolution and have no place in decent Christian reform. Labor has been sinned against, it is true, but its own sins are neither trivial nor venial. May I not pray that the Editors of THE COMMONWEAL keep in mind not only the wounded workingman, but also the terrified wife and children who await his return from work?

WALTER C. STERNE.

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THE BREVIARY IN ENGLISH

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: In reply to the stimulating letter from El Paso on page 501 of your issue of September 9, signed "A Teaching Religious," it may be worth noting that the work of the League of the Divine Office (with its center at St. Joseph's Church, West 125th Street) includes a monthly common and a daily private recitation of one of the Day Hours in English. A good English version of the offices of Vespers and Compline is to be found in every pew at Corpus Christi Church.

A remark in the same letter is, however, a challenge to anyone interested in Latin studies. It is undeniable that the majority of "moderns" have no time for the painstaking process of learning a supposedly difficult language, but there remain those whose leadership in literature or other fields wholly justifies a classical training. Much might be said on this point, but it is enough here to mention the fact that a list of speakers at a classical gathering is apt to include well-known columnists, financiers, etc., whose interest extends beyond the anthology translation to the original language of the masterpiece. It may be added that at least one large university has reported an increasing Latin enrolment.

Such an article as the charming "Pro Pelle Cutem" by Michael Lynch in THE COMMONWEAL of January 8, 1937, will suggest the unexpected pleasures of the modern reader equipped with Latin.

SUSAN MARTIN.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Reading the letter by "a Teaching Religious" about the great Prayer Book of the world, the Breviary (the beautiful prayers and readings for the four seasons of the year), I wish to say that John, the Marquess of Bute, K.T., had translated the Breviary into beautiful English and being a very rich man had it published in the year 1908 by Bleekwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London. He was a great Catholic and devoted to the Catholic Church.

It would be excellent for publishers of Catholic books to advertise in all papers.

A READER.

CRITICISM OF ART

Grand Rapids, Mich.

TO the Editors: Mr. Jerome Mellquist has not attempted to give an account of my book, "Charles Sheeler, Artist in the American Tradition" (THE COMMONWEAL, September 2), but he has revealed some ideas on the criticism of art and also on the art of criticism.

His contention is that writers do not understand art. He does not explain how art criticism may be communicated, but it would appear that language is out altogether. He even holds that the reviewer of a book on art should not read it. At least he cannot have read the small section of my book on which he bases his contention. He quotes me rightly as saying, "But surely line too may be a dominant interest" for the artist, but he cannot have read the sentence for he discusses it as though I had written *"the* dominant interest," which has quite another meaning. He uses my quotation of Marin, who says that the painter must follow paint, but he construes this to mean that the painter must follow color, which again is a different idea. These are details, but when Mr. Mellquist uses them to arrive at the conclusion that I believe in the separability of line and color and that Sheeler is not a painter because he believes in this division and that my book is based upon this fundamental misunderstanding, all of which proves that writers should not write about art, he is going too far even for one who is particularly tolerant of unconventional procedures in reviews.

The theme of this brief section of my book is that line and color are *inseparable* (nor can they be separated from form in space, an element in painting which Mr. Mellquist neglects to mention, thus reducing art to two-dimensional pattern). I quote Sheeler to this effect on pages 175 and 176. The idea is further borne out by the context, and I pick it up again on page 188 after a discussion of related ideas. Mr. Mellquist winds up his piece with a few *ex cathedra* judgments, again ignoring contexts.

The charge that the reviewer hasn't read the book is so old that one hesitates to make it. Perhaps Mr. Mellquist is only "confused" by his strong attachment to the idea that writers do not understand art.

CONSTANCE ROURKE.

INTERNATIONAL IFS AND WHYS

Mt. Vernon, Ill.

TO the Editors: Brickbats and bouquets are the inheritance of editors who dare. Dodge the bricks, accept the flowers, but don't go to sleep.

I wish you could get somebody to answer the following questions for your readers:

(1) Why is permanent peace impossible between the "democratic" nations and the "fascist" nations as long as the "democratic" nations control *for privileged trade and exploitation* thirty times as much territory as do the "fascist" nations?

(2) Why must British and French imperial policy try to keep Spain forever weak? How did Britain and France in past centuries grow fat at the expense of Spain?

(3) Is there any connection between French control of the Skoda munition works (which supply the enemies of Germany with materials of war) and the Sudeten problem?

(4) Could our daily newspapers survive if they were deprived of the advertising revenue coming from the dry goods and clothing stores? How does the advertising merchant influence editorial and news service policies?

(5) Several months before Japan opened war on China a correspondent of THE COMMONWEAL wrote from Peiping that foreign observers there little doubted that Peiping and Tientsin were doomed to become Russian? Why is that aspect of the Sino-Japanese problem no longer mentioned in our press?

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(6) If the British and the French empires were not so completely satiated, no longer in the market for stray German colonial territory, but compelled "by circumference" to remain on the defensive all along the line, would they be so anxious to avoid war as they now actually are?

(7) Why doesn't our government try to exchange confiscated oil and real estate properties in Mexico for Lower California and the mouth of the Colorado?

(8) Why didn't President Roosevelt look around for a suitable air base on one of the Galapagos Islands while down there a-fishing?

REV. EDWARD DAHMUS.

ARE WE FAIR TO THE CHURCH?

Villanova, Pa.

TO the Editors: We read Bishop Lucey's two recent articles in THE COMMONWEAL (September 9 and 16) and then reread them together. Certainly this is one of the finest statements of the Catholic social position in modern times that we have had in years. It occurred to me that it would be a wise thing, if possible, to reprint both articles together in a small brochure.

THE COMMONWEAL is to be congratulated for having had the honor of publishing this statement by one of our great Bishops.

RICHARD L-G. DEVERALL,
The Christian Front.

Jamaica, N. Y.

TO the Editors: May I make use of your communications column to clear up a point in the recent article of Bishop Robert E. Lucey? The statement, "Child labor is no longer a problem in this country," was quoted as coming from a religious weekly. I read the sentence in the Brooklyn *Tablet* some time ago, but it was a requotation from a speech made by President Roosevelt. The criticism must be leveled first, therefore, at the President.

We are very proud of our Brooklyn *Tablet,* so if the reference is to our diocesan weekly, it is only right to say who was the originator of the remark.

EDWARD JEREMIAH REGAN.

RACISM IN FRANCE

Glace Bay, N. S.

TO the Editors: For the sake of the record, a correction is in order. In Joseph Folliet's letter under the head "Racism in France," issue of September 9, the Arabic word *El Ouma,* which is the name of the Mohammedan nationalists' organ in Algeria, is translated into the English *The Star.* This is wrong: no doubt the writer meant to say *The State.* Even that is not strictly accurate, although nearer the mark. The correct translation of *El Ouma,* or as English-writing Orientalists would write it, *El-Ummah,* is *The People* or *The Nation.*

ANTHONY TRABOULSEE.

Points & Lines

What Is America to Do?

DURING the Czechoslovakian crisis it has been interesting to see what definite policies representative American periodicals and public personages have been proposing for the country. By no means all the newspapers and magazines have undertaken to put forward something that can be considered a concrete point of view. On September 20, the New York *Times,* most powerful of American dailies, did clearly indicate its desires:

> This is not to say that collective security is dead beyond recall. The time will come when men and nations everywhere will have to think of it again, to work to make it a reality. For collective security is much more than a noble dream in an ignoble world; it is a practical necessity under the conditions which prevail today, with the fate of every nation tied inextricably to the fate of every other nation, and the world will know no peace and no real respite from alarm until the dream is realized. . . . Yet the American people, having refused to assume any obligation to strengthen the structure we helped to build, the structure of which the keystone and symbol was Czechoslovakia, the state born in Pittsburgh and sponsored by our government, have no right to urge on others the terrible risks and responsibilities we do not share.

Before the crisis developed its greatest intensity, the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* propounded this as "America's First Duty":

> It seems to the *Post-Dispatch* that the European crisis should stimulate us to put our own house in as perfect order as possible. In so far as our depressed economic condition is the result of rivalries and hatreds among ourselves, is it not time, viewed from the perspective of Europe's difficulties, to stop some of our petty squabbles?
>
> An economically sound America, capable of making its plenitude of resources meet the needs of the people, would be a brilliant example in an insane world; moreover, it would serve as an automatic warning against any power which might have designs inimical to our interests in any part of the Western Hemisphere, and it would safeguard us against either communism or fascism within our borders.
>
> The plight of Europe should cause us to declare a truce among ourselves; to quit useless bickering and name-calling; it should cause the President and other high officers of the government to allay any suspicion of hostility to business, and it should cause business to give the administration a little more realistic cooperation.

The Chicago *Daily News* shuns the rôle of prophet:

> And we? Faced with world war on both oceans, what should be our course? The neutrality act? Tie up our ships? Stop arms shipments to everyone? Stop exporting anything except in foreign bottoms? Abandon neutral rights? Get off the seas, and take orders from Britain in the Atlantic, Japan in the Pacific? Anything for peace? Or, hit by a new depression due to reduced exports, and aroused in our emotions, might we finally feel forced to intervene, having found that, with Britain, France and Russia on one side, and Germany, Japan and Italy on the other, we held the balance of power, with all its difficult responsibilities?
>
> No man can read the future. But in such utterly obscure moments as these anyone can try, and perhaps one person's guess is about as good as another's.

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The *Daily Worker* has a very belligerent and complex editorial on September 20:

> The issue before peace-loving humanity is resistance to betrayal and for peace. . . .
>
> Nothing could be more harmful than to think that, however awful, however deceitful, however knavish this betrayal of Czechoslovakia might be, it purchases peace. Nothing is further from the truth. . . .
>
> Isolation, inaction, aloofness at this moment is the quickest way to bring war into the world and the U. S. into war. . . .
>
> Let it be said right here that we, as Communists, as well as spokesmen for the most advanced of the working class and progressive movements, who are interested in peace, know there are some who erroneously think that the struggle against fascism, the defeat of Hitler and Mussolini, can be advanced by military measures.
>
> We sharply condemn such sentiments and declare our contention that the fight for democracy and against fascism is inseparably bound up with the fight for peace in this situation.
>
> We contribute our utmost to the fight for peace against the war mongers, and all those instigating war, with no matter what arguments. . . .
>
> It is up to this country to take the initiative in this momentous hour.

It is difficult, however, to separate the tone of our Communist periodicals from active military measures. In an editorial of September 19, to be sure, the *Daily Worker* specified as follows:

> The U. S. can now help to keep war out of the world by—
>
> Invoking the Kellogg Pact;
>
> Clamping down an embargo on the war-making Nazi dictatorship;
>
> Declaring that an invasion of Czechoslovakia involving world peace would imperil the security of the U. S.
>
> In these ways, the U. S. can be kept out of war.

In an address by Earl Browder quoted in the same paper, American Communist policy is propounded in this way:

> But we who do not abandon the struggle for peace, who know that the fascist madmen can be halted in their wild course by unity of all peace-loving peoples, we who are the overwhelming majority of the world's population, we demand the end to all concession to the warmakers, the unconditional support of Czechoslovakian independence and democracy, the final consolidation of the peace front of the world. . . .
>
> But we should each and every one of us, as well as our organizations, write to the President, to Secretary Hull and to the press, urging in this critical hour that our government declare: That the United States is prepared to consult with all governments wishing to preserve orderly relations, the means required to restrain those powers which demonstrate an intention to break up these orderly relations by military aggressions; that in such consultations the United States is prepared to exert its full moral and economic influence to secure the enforcement of the general will to peace. We should further point out that the universal aggressive operations of German fascism, which is conducting an economic war against the United States, has already brought that country under the provisions of existing legislation, which authorizes the President to cut off all trade by a general embargo, and call upon the President to register our protest against this universal aggression by immediately applying that embargo. We should never allow it to be forgotten that Czechoslovakia and the problem of its protection is merely part of the world situation; that China occupies a front line trench for the protection of the rest of the world; that America cannot continue complacently to supply Japan with more than half of munitions of war to murder, subjugate the Chinese people, except at most dire peril to its own future; that we must move decisively toward a complete embargo against Japan.
>
> We must finally wipe out the shame of our assistance to the fascist powers in their invasion of Spain, by lifting the embargo on that republic and opening our markets wide to the Spanish people.

The *Nation* proclaims this:

> And the time has come when warnings should be backed with action. There are a number of ways in which this can be done without involving this country in struggles that are peculiarly European. . . . The State Department has technically broken the law in issuing licenses for shipments of arms and ammunition to Germany. . . . Hitler would know definitely that he could not ocount on material aid from the United States in the event of war. The Hull trade policy furnishes an even better vehicle for throwing our influence on the side of the non-aggressor countries. Germany has deliberately rejected and actively combated that policy, both in theory and in fact. . . . Why not give the Nazis a dose of their own medicine and place heavier penalties on countries that refuse to accept the principle of equal treatment? To supplement this action the United States should redouble its efforts to conclude favorable trade agreements with the countries that accept this principle and to strengthen them economically against pressure from the totalitarian states. The Anglo-American pact in particular should be carried to a conclusion, and efforts should be made to enter into negotiations with the threatened countries of Eastern Europe. In addition, a campaign might well be started to encourage the purchase of goods from the countries which have entered into agreements with us—especially Czechoslovakia.
>
> When Congress reassembles, its first job should be the repeal of the Neutrality Act and the Johnson Act. Neither law has served or can serve the purpose for which it was intended. Both stand in the way of help to possible victims of aggression.

America warns:

> But with Europe frantic over threats of war, it is not too soon for every American to anticipate in his spoken and written word the solemn resolve of the vast majority of Americans: in the eventuality of another war, the United States knows nothing but the most stringent and impartial neutrality.

The Baltimore *Sun* reports that:

> Renewal of a campaign for enactment of a war referendum amendment to the Constitution was discussed in congressional quarters today as officials of the executive department watched another day of swift and ominous European developments in silence.
>
> Representative Ludlow, sponsor of the war vote amendment rejected by the last Congress, said he was prepared to champion the issue again, and was hopeful of early success. . . .
>
> Proposals to nationalize muntions manufacture, to draft wealth and industry in time of war, to remove profits from manufacture of war materials and to strengthen existing neutrality legislation were among the subjects discussed by the Kansas Senator Capper in the editorial, captioned "Can We Keep Out of the Next War?"

Colonel Theodore Roosevelt is reported by the *Sun* as saying:

> "Everywhere our people are discussing what part we should play. To me that rôle is clear. We should keep out of that war. . . . We should fight only to defend our territory and free institutions. We must not be led into wars of vague and meddlesome benevolence, no matter how specious the argument. . . . The issue today is the preservation of representative democratic government. This issue overshadows every other problem that is confronting the country.

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Should we fail to maintain a free government for our children, none of the problems that our people are confronting today will matter, for it will be impossible to solve any of them."

Speaking to the St. Louis Lawyers' Association, Senator Walsh of Massachusetts, chairman of the Senate Naval Affairs Committee, said:

"If war strikes in Europe, we must keep out of it. We realize no one knows now who were the victors of the last war. We went to war in 1917 to save the world for democracy. Now I think we should stay at home and save the United States democracy from foreign propaganda and 'isms.' There is one sure way to keep out of war. Stay at home. Mind our own business.

"In a mad, fighting world, we can't afford to lose, not our national wealth, but our spiritual life, the independence and free will of a great people. I plead with you to preserve our liberties and our institutions from any ruthless dictator."

Senator Key Pittman, chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, speaking over the radio from California, said:

"The overwhelming sympathies of the United States are with the democracies, and yet the people of the United States rebelled against the sacrifice of lives of our citizens in the defense of democracies which cannot be trusted to defend themselves and those to whom they are obligated. . . . The Senate of the United States, in my opinion, will not vote for any treaty, resolution or measure that authorizes the entrance into any foreign war or any alliance or joint action with any foreign government or governments in behalf of any foreign power. . . . The Neutrality Act may be amended, and the welfare and peace of our country may require certain changes in the embargo provisions of the act. . . . There should be retained, however, such reasonable restraint upon our citizens with regard to commerce with belligerent countries as are now provided in the Neutrality Act in the provision commonly called the 'Cash and Carry' provision. . . ."

Isolationist Senator Nye told the Steuben Society dinner in New York:

"I rejoice in the word that comes from yesterday's meeting of the Cabinet in Washington to the effect that our government will remain aloof and will guard against being drawn into the conflict. Yet I must view what seems to be a repetition of errors by our government, errors such as prevented success for our resolve of 1914-1916 to stay out of Europe's war."

The five dangerous points the Senator finds were: the President's Chicago "quarantine" speech; undue military preparedness; large foreign holdings in our financial and security markets; cooperation between Washington and "certain European powers"; and consultation with them on "steps, sometimes only contemplated steps" in diplomatic maneuvering.

Senator Borah, Republican dean of the Foreign Affairs Committee, issued a statement:

"Whatever the nations of Europe may see fit to do in their effort to secure peace is a matter upon which the European nations alone must pass judgment. The people of the United States are not interested in European boundaries or with the plans of European nations in regard to European matters. . . . The people of this country may now look forward to a deluge of propaganda seeking to involve the United States in these controversies and all in the name of peace.

"They call it peace to get us in. But after we get in, it is war."

The Stage & Screen

Lightnin'

I DID not see "Lightnin' " during the five years of its New York run, and therefore I have no nostalgic memories either of the play or of its original chief protagonist, Mr. Frank Bacon. But many of those who will go to the revival saw its original version and will give to it the eyes and ears of their youth. To these whatever I say will have little weight, as I can only record my impressions of Winchell Smith's comedy-drama as given in 1938. For "Lightnin' " is just *this*—a comedy-drama, in which the comedy is much better than the drama, despite the fact that there is a lot of "plot." But the plot is very dated indeed; in fact it is quite eighteen-eightyish. It has to do with the signing of a deed in which a villainous lawyer and a real-estate agent are put to rout by a Good Old Souse. So what the play really amounts to is a character study of the Good Old Souse and his love for his wife. As Mr. John Anderson has so justly written, old men are the heroes of the American drama, and Lightnin' Bill Jones is therefore in the true tradition. He is a drunkard but he has a heart of gold, he is lazy but he is faithful, he is a liar but he is lovable. Given such combinations he canot fail to touch the heart, and when to all this is added a droll and sly humor we know his character is irresistible—or at least that it ought to be.

But, alas, I have to confess I was at times slightly bored, especially in the first and last acts. Much water has flowed under the bridges since 1919, and the American drama has come of age. So though the scene in the divorce court had its hold, the laughs seemed to be those caused by jokes which it is the proper thing to laugh at. Mr. Golden has given the play an admirable cast. Fred Stone knows his way about the stage and has a warm and humorous personality, and Mrs. Priestly Morrison, Henry Richards, Walter Gilbert, Muriel Hutchison and Franklyn Fox all do their parts as well as anybody could possibly desire. And John Griggs as the attorney admirably shows how an old-fashioned heavy part can be made light and gracious. Mr. Griggs is a young actor who will bear watching. So "Lightnin' " makes an innocent and amusing evening to those who don't demand too much. (At the John Golden Theatre.)

Come Across

THIS is another comedy-drama, a modern English one by Guy Beauchamp and Michael Pertwee, and has to do with an American gangster in a London hospital and his murder on the operating table by one of his henchmen. The plot is rather preposterous, but the comedy is often excellent, and the players are admirable. Special mention should be made of Cameron Hall's droll cockney hospital orderly. Mr. Hall is a welcome addition to our stage. Excellent too are Arthur Vinton as the chief gangster, Don Costello and Richard Taber as his henchmen, A. P. Kaye as the Scotland Yard Inspector and Helen

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Trenholm as the nurse. "Come Across" is distinctly better than the average play which opens the New York season and will please those who like crook plays of the more leisurely and humorous type. GRENVILLE VERNON.

Gifts from Abroad

RECENTLY there have arrived in this country a couple of unusual foreign films that are worthy of special note. With everyone holding his breath in regard to the European situation, Jean Renoir's timely "Grand Illusion" is a masterpiece in understatement. A war film that shows none of the horrors of war but vividly depicts the psychological strain of unnatural times on a group of French prisoners in a German camp, "Grand Illusion" becomes really a study in the characterization of men who are caught by war. Captors and captives suffer alike. Eric von Stroheim, that perfect German officer descended from centuries of aristocracy, holds in contempt prisoners Jean Gabin, a lieutenant who was a machinist, and Dalio, a wealthy Jew, but respects and admires Pierre Fresnay, a French aristocrat who finally sacrifices himself that the other two men may escape. It is unfortunate to have to rely on the English subtitles and thus miss some subtleties in characterization, but the direction and restrained acting are so good that one forgets he is listening to German and French, and is swept away by the bitter irony of the theme and the reality of the flight of the two prisoners. One of them falls in love with a German peasant widow who gives them refuge and he plans to return to her when all war is over. To which plan the other Frenchman replies, "What an illusion." This French film has been banned in Germany and Italy.

We see so many pictures in which man overcomes environment and circumstances that it is a novel experience to watch a film in which man is defeated by nature. Such is Michael Powell's "The Edge of the World." Based on the depopulation of St. Kilda, one of the Hebrides Islands off Scotland, this English picture, reminiscent of "Man of Aran," shows with unflinching starkness the last years of the islanders who are finally defeated by lack of food and peat, and are forced to move to the mainland. It is a true motion picture in that its fine photography is its drama. Although it has a few English players in the leading parts and a slight story built around the arguments between one group who want to leave the island and another who want to remain, the real actors in the film are the wild sea, the gulls, rain, fog, animals, jagged cliffs, grass and the people of the island of Foula where the picture was made. Scenes showing the homely, weather-beaten, peaceful faces of these islanders in church and in council, and the photographs of the grey and lonely wildness of the island are unforgettable for their sheer beauty.

We suspect that the French sent over "Avocat d'Amour"—called "Counsel for Romance"—just to show us that they too can make Class B pictures even when they use their stars. The story runs like an old-fashioned musical comedy, with Danielle Darrieux as a charming lawyer falling in love with Henry Garat, her first client, and the two leads singing several songs, the music of which is gay and catchy. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Day

Man over Environment

A Personalist Manifesto, by Emmanuel Mounier; translated from the French by monks of St. John's Abbey with a Foreword by Virgil Michel, O.S.B. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.00.

THE CONCEPT of personalism and the philosophy of culture which it involves are regrettably too little known in the United States. It was therefore a boon which the monks of St. John's Abbey bestowed on us when they made their excellent translation of the magisterial document of Emmanuel Mounier, youthful French philosopher and leader of an international organization known as the Amis d'Esprit.

Personalism according to the "Manifesto" is any doctrine that affirms the primacy of the human person over the material environment in which man lives and over the techniques man uses to promote his well-being. Personalism places man at the center of the social order. A personalist civilization is because of man and for his sake. Personalism then represents a revolt against a concept of culture which subjects man to the play of economic or biological forces.

All doctrines of personalism are rooted in the Thomistic distinction between the individual and the person, although the *Esprit* movement is not precisely Thomist for it welcomes all philosophical points of view. The notion of the person accepted by the *Esprit* group is that of a human individual who exercises "a maximum of initiative, responsibility and spiritual life."

Mounier insists that personalism is not a closed doctrine but a core of ideas which may attract men and women of quite divergent views to the task of restoring respect for the human person. Here, everyone interested in the welfare of his community and healthfully sceptical of set solutions, panaceas and utopias will find "a method of thinking and of living."

Personalism is at once a critique and an outline of action. It rejects the view that the present can be mended by tinkering with existing institutions and structures as many liberals, especially in the United States, would make us believe. Equally it opposes the doctrinaries and moralizers for whom categorical imperatives and the hortatory mood are substitutes for cool thinking about hard realities. The "Manifesto" critically examines the truths and errors of bourgeois liberalism, fascism and communism in an objective mood that deserves underlining. "The method of polemical refutation which underestimates its adversaries and rejects *en bloc* not only the errors but also the truths contained in them, is the method most calculated to strengthen the position such errors derive from the truths with which they are combined" (page 45).

Mounier, speaking as he does throughout the book for the many friends of *Esprit* who contributed to the four years of discussion which preceded the writing of the "Manifesto," sets forth a program of action outlined in "its preliminary conditions and general essentials." The discussions on education, on women, on economic and political organization and on the international and interracial communities are presented in a fashion calculated to win the adherence of experts as well as of non-experts.

Not only have the translators given us a fine English version of the "Manifesto," but Father Michel's Fore-

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word is of especial value to the American reader for it tells us something of the Amis d'Esprit and furnishes us with an excellent interpretive commentary.

CHARLES O'DONNELL.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

The United States and World Organization, 1920-1933, by Denna Frank Fleming. New York: Columbia University Press. $4.00.

THIS book provides much badly needed information on questions related to our present position in world politics. It clarifies the reasons back of our failure to assume any responsibility for the enforcement of the Versailles Treaty, though at the same time claiming all the rights and advantages of the treaty. Step by step, with ample documentation, the author follows through the disgraceful part played by selfish partizan politics in the decade after the World War. The idealism of Wilson is portrayed, not as mere visionary hope, but as "the ability to see ahead, which is the very essence of statesmanship."

The account given of the partizan fight against our acceptance of the League should put to rest the parrot-like utterances so often heard that "the United States rejected the League after a solemn referendum." The author gives ample evidence to show that such a referendum was never held. On the contrary, tricky politics, false promises, "round-robins" in favor of a league concealed what was to have been a solemn referendum. Though frankly partizan in supporting the need for "the reign of law based on the consent of the governed and sustained by the organized opinion of mankind," the author is fair in letting the opponents of this plan for collective security tell their own story—and condemn themselves through frequent quotations from letters and writings of the men who did most to oppose the plan.

A brief survey of major international complications since 1920 serves to drive home with unrelenting force the tragedy of our loss of leadership in world affairs. The blame is placed squarely, and the results are not glossed over. The book is stimulating and thought-provoking throughout. Regardless of party affiliation, one who is willing to "face facts" will profit tremendously by reading it. Each reader may differ in his estimate of certain characters, or in the interpretation of certain events (for example, one might wish the author had not allowed the usual newspaper interpretation of the Spanish situation); nevertheless the tragic story of our failure to play our part in world organization is told with clearness and force. The alternative pointed out for our refusal to accept such organization is one that deserves careful—may we even say prayerful?—consideration of all who place country before party. ELIZABETH MORRISSY.

The Nazi Primer, translated by Harwood L. Childs, with a commentary by William E. Dodd. New York: Harper and Brothers. $1.75.

COMPARED with the speeches of the Fuehrer and his lieutenants as they are reported in the American press this "official handbook for the schooling of Hitler youth" is surprisingly reasonable and mild in tone. A considerable portion of it is devoted to anthropology and the eight "races" discovered by Gunther. Although the "Nordic race," which accounts for only half the inhabitants of Germany, is quietly assigned all the virtues and "predisposed to leadership by nature," the authors introduce enough scientific and historic factors to cast grave doubts on the rational acceptability of the Nordic myth. They do, however, cut through all these difficulties and complexities to reaffirm their adherence to it on the basis of "genetics."

The historical course of the German "race" is much more highly oversimplified. As Mr. Dodd suggests the Greek and Roman, not to say the Christian, contributions to their civilization are all but ignored. One of the most interesting portions of this section is the list of German communities overseas and in various parts of Europe. Finally the primer briefly sketches the economic problem of the Third Reich with special reference to the loss of colonies, markets and raw materials and to the national economic rehabilitation of the past five years. As a whole the primer is a skilful blending of truth and error. It is not in itself belligerent, but provides a background of knowledge and ignorance that can easily be stirred to a frenzied pitch. EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

Three Guineas, by Virginia Woolf. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

VIRGINIA WOOLF'S fluid, brilliant prose style needs no introduction. Here she ramifies the theme of "A Room of One's Own," taking as springboard three requests for the contribution of a guinea to a woman's college; to a society for obtaining employment for professional women; to a society for preventing war. Mrs. Woolf answers these requests for "an educated man's daughter": a daughter who has achieved a room of her own and now desires her name on the door as well. Her discussion of the psychological roots of war and tyranny is lucid and vigorous, marked by that high degree of civilization which distinguishes—and limits—all of her writing. Once again one is reminded that limitation in her solution: she would prevent war by the "concerted inaction" of an anonymous, unorganized association of the educated and economically emancipated daughter of the British ruling caste. D. B.

March of the Iron Men, by Roger Burlingame. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.75.

THE SUB-TITLE of this book is "A Social History of Union through Invention," and its theme is neither a technical nor an economic history of invention in these United States, but a picture of how (as the author sees it) technology made possible and wrought a union of the states. For this purpose, Mr. Burlingame does not feel it necessary to carry the story beyond the Civil War. Naturally there is much technical information, nearly all of it fascinating (as for instance the preliminary steps which enabled Morse to put together his telegraph, for which he later claimed the title of inventor), and much economic reference, but both are subordinated to the main purpose, which is to show that we have achieved union through technology.

It was Aldous Huxley, was it not, who said that technology had enabled the modern world to move ever more rapidly and comfortably backward? There can be no doubt of the social and economic effect of the cotton gin on the South. There can be no doubt that the ruthless drive of the rails across our Continent absorbed labor, capital, invention, opened a vast area to settlement, and brought the Pacific to our doors. There can be no doubt that the telegraph, by enabling us all to hear the same news at the same time, gave us a more national consciousness. But Goodyear's invention of the vulcanizing of rubber has now given us a new method of transportation,

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which has resulted in better roads that have spread ribbon slums across America, which kills more than 30,000 people annually, which has congested city traffic almost to a standstill, which has concentrated labor in a few centers where periodic unemployment makes a terrific problem, which has so united us that one town looks like every other town, conforming to a standard pattern of ugliness. Similarly, technology applied to communication has given us the radio with its attendant banalities, and the talking pictures which have well nigh destroyed the beautiful art of Shakespeare and Booth. And if we look a bit farther afield at technology, we see that while it may have given our nation unity, it has certainly done nothing whatever to unite Europe. A train may run from Paris to the Bosphorus, but it is through nations at each others' throats. And Germany even sends out air waves to make Brazil hate the United States. Mr. Burlingame's book is fascinating and provocative, but it doesn't convince one reader, at least, that the technology of today is any more capable of producing a fine civilization than the Concord of Thoreau, who watched with some curiosity the building of the Fitchburg railroad while he lived in a remote hut on Walden Pond. WALTER PRICHARD EATON.

CRITICISM

Portraits of a Lifetime, by Jacques-Emile Blanche. 30 *plates. New York: Coward-McCann.* $4.00.
Five Hundred Self-Portraits. 534 *photogravures,* 7 *color plates. New York: Oxford University Press.* $3.00.

IN A PORTRAIT the likeness is the thing. And in his book of reminiscences on those who have sat for him, "Portraits of a Lifetime," Jacques-Emile Blanche, the well-known French portraitist, shows that he is no less successful at creating a resemblance with words than with the brush. But a good portrait needs something else: it must penetrate to the essence of the personality as well. In this respect M. Blanche also qualifies. Consider: "At Wargemont Renoir felt at home, they were all amused at his greed, his confidential attitude toward the butler, the chef, the gardener who picked peaches and plums, which the artist sometimes immortalized in his still-life paintings, and the geraniums and roses which his brush stroked as gently on the canvas as one caresses the cheek of a child, or a woman's neck." Who does not know the effortless colorist better after these few strokes? So, too, with the many others he delineates—from Whistler to Gertrude Stein—in the upper Anglo-French art world since 1870.

M. Blanche is also a critic. His books—though not as well known here as in France—are frequently acute on those artists he cares for. In the present volume, for example, he says that "as a draughtsman, Rodin was the last of the baroque artists," or, again, that Henry James has gone very far, much further than those that came before him, but his characters, whether they be exceptional or artificial, are portrayed in a style that partakes of Vermeer and Cubism. His art is static, he lacks the dynamic power of those moralists who have created generous types." There are many more such delightful and revealing judgments, appearing amid the smaller matters of teas and parties and interviews. Random, personal, sometimes unfair but always civilized, they furnish the real meat of the book.

Finally, M. Blanche is a historian, primarily a historian of manners through art. A child of the French bourgeoisie, early acquainted with England, a friend of the distinguished of his time, he paints throughout the larger canvas of the pre-war interlude of 1870-1914. He lets us make the comments. In short he lacks an *idée générale*. Nevertheless, let us not ask too much of the portraitist. Sometimes to be perceptive is enough.

"Five Hundred Self-Portraits," another in the series of cheap but invaluable art publications of the Phaidon Press (now transferred to Switzerland), is, on the other hand, sometimes deficient in the very qualities of insight which make M. Blanche so charming. It springs, in other words, from the German tradition. But it has a unique recommendation: for the first time it assembles the chief self-portraits known to painting, sculpture and the graphic arts from the time of Egypt down to the present. Here we can see what the artist thought of himself. It makes a good comparison with a book like the Frenchman's, as well as an indispensable addition in its own right.

JEROME MELLQUIST.

The Life and Poems of Mirabeau B. Lamar, by Philip Graham. Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press. $3.50.

IN 1857, Mirabeau Lamar, sometime president of Texas, issued a little volume of "Verse Memorials." He was sixty, but it was a year later that he wrote "The Daughter of Mendoza," upon which his poetic fame has rested, and must rest. This song is so fine that students have long wondered if Lamar had tossed off other gems, or had foreshadowed the masterpiece, and the volume of 1857 was known to be incomplete. Therefore a modern edition of Lamar's poetry has been one of the chief desiderata of American scholars. Professor Graham has supplied our lack. He has given us as complete a collection of Lamar's verse as long search in old newspapers and MSS. permits; he omits no poem known to survive, and he mentions lost poems. And he has written a fine sketch of the romantically gallant life of the statesman, with emphasis on the personal significance of the poems, which are primarily connected with private rather than public life.

Our questions are answered. Lamar did foreshadow his great poem in "To My Daughter," "Carmelita," and the "Belle of Nindiri," but he never, save in "The Daughter of Mendoza," wrote a lyric of flawless perfection, afire with the gaiety of the tropic night. Professor Graham's treatment of the literary background of Lamar is somewhat meager; the debt to Moore is rightly emphasized, but poems in four-beat couplets are not evidence of a debt to Pope, though that debt probably existed; and more might have been made of the revelation of Lamar's literary enthusiasms in the "New Year's Address of 1822," and the echoes of Burns.

The handling of the text is occasionally curious; there are places where the texts of the 1857 volume (which was carefully supervised by the poet himself) are set aside, as the editor points out, for earlier versions, or where a title from one source accompanies a text from another. This sort of thing was common a half century ago, but the present tendency is to avoid it, except for far weightier reasons than seem to occur in Lamar's case.

These however are minor faults in a fine book, which every serious lover of American poetry will receive with keen interest, and deep gratitude to the compiler, who is both an enthusiast and a judicious master of his subject. THOMAS OLLIVE MABBOTT.

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MEMOIRS

More Lives Than One, by Claude Bragdon. New York: Alfred E. Knopf. $3.75.

IN THIS autobiography of Mr. Claude Bragdon, he quotes Mr. Ananda Coomaraswamy's reply to him when he told him about writing the autobiography. The reply was, "What a foolish thing to do." This may have been the reaction of the eastern mind to the impulsive indiscretions of the western, and, less aged, mentality. Even to the western mind, however, the question must arise as to the reasonableness and suitability of indulging in the writing of memoirs. Not that these memoirs of Mr. Bragdon are indiscreet. They are, as a matter of fact, impeccable in this respect and in their tone and content they gravitate toward the gentle, and unimportant tastefulness of the period of Mr. Bragdon's activity as an architect and a designer for the stage. There is no revelation of a personal or spiritual kind here, other than such recordings as would be common knowledge to one's circle.

Like most books of memoirs, the record of his boyhood is the high point of the book. This is curiously true in the majority of memoirs, even when such books seem only to have been written to celebrate the importance of the various writers' friends, in whose glory they hope to enshrine their own position in life.

In contrast to such snob-like, and dreary, recordings of meetings, Mr. Bragdon's book is pleasantly modest and, while one is left with the feeling that this is just another book, it does picture an alert mind lost in the mazes of the eclecticism and pseudo-liberalism of the period, his dissatisfaction with it and his somewhat futile groping for a truer and better basis for life and art. Too many diverse and quite unequal things are given the same value in architecture, and in spite of his admiration for Louis H. Sullivan, Mr. Bragdon was too much the product of his period and too marked by its philosophical and architectural eclecticism to ever escape from the safe middle region beloved by all so-called liberals. That Mr. Bragdon's spiritual refuge should been the negative region of theosophy is in accord with that indiscisiveness of the liberal who here finds refuge and peace in the complementing nebulousness of occultism. BARRY BYRNE.

MISCELLANEOUS

Notes of a Countryman, by Alfred Paul Rogers. Boston: Bruce Humphries. $1.75.

IT IS said there are three kinds of country dwellers: those who live off their farms; those who live on them; and those who write about it. Mr. Rogers aims his too brief collection of essays from the third emplacement, at that pathetic audience only just discovering the thrilling realities of the world they live in.

Such essays as "Storms" and "Clouds"—the latter needs some blue pencilling—remind us, for example, that millions in cities are unaware of the major part weather plays in their own lives. Yet but for the thunder showers the day before Waterloo, all subsequent history might have been different. Weather is not limited to a remote, over-publicized Dust Bowl: it is right around us all the time. So too with the whole pageant of natural beauties and homely pleasures Mr. Rogers hymns. Not only recruits, but also veteran country-dwellers whose eyes may have been dimmed to the glory of the woods by the thickness of the timber, will find new vistas through the pages of "Notes of a Countryman." HENRY TETLOW.

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TRAVEL

DESCRIPTIVE FOLDERS and information offered those contemplating attending the National Conference of Catholic Charities and Society of St. Vincent de Paul meetings, Richmond, Va., Oct. 8-12. Also the National Eucharistic Congress, New Orleans, Oct. 17. Farley Travel Agency, 535 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

LENDING LIBRARY

A CATHOLIC LENDING LIBRARY has been opened in Harlem, at 48 West 138th Street. Everybody welcome Tuesdays and Fridays, from 7 to 10 p.m. Tel. AUdubon 3-0219. Catherine de Hueck, librarian.

The Inner Forum

THREE major meetings of Catholics are scheduled for the next few weeks, the first being the sixteenth annual convention of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, which opens as this issue of THE COMMONWEAL reaches its readers—September 25—and continues for a week. This year's convention is being held at Vincennes, Indiana. On the opening day pontifical high Mass will be celebrated in the municipal auditorium; following sessions will be devoted to consideration of every sort of rural problem in a most inclusive program of general and section meetings. Six Bishops are to speak as well as a great number of priests and laity interested in American agriculture and farm life.

October 1 will see the opening in Hartford, Connecticut, of the fourth national catechetical congress of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. The theme of the congress, which is to be under the chairmanship of Bishop-elect Matthew F. Brady, is "to extend the teaching and practise of Christian Doctrine," which is in a sense the central purpose of the Confraternity itself. There are to be eight general sessions at which will be discussed such topics as "Religion in the Home," "Religious Teachers," "Distributing Catholic Literature," etc. Forty model religion classes will be conducted by specially chosen teachers. In conjunction with the catechetical demonstration, the Catholic Biblical Association of America will hold a two-day session of lectures on technical aspects of the revised English translation of the Bible, which promises to be one of the largest Catholic gatherings of Biblical scholars ever held.

Between October 16 and 20 will be held the Eighth National Eucharistic Congress in New Orleans. Over 300,000 visitors are expected to attend in addition to the considerable Catholic local population. Plans have been made to use to the full the characteristic charm and atmosphere of the older sections of the city, and there will be many reminiscences of its early French and Spanish history. An elaborate design has been approved for the main altar of the Congress, which incorporates many of the materials and motifs typical of New Orleans colonial architecture.

CONTRIBUTORS

Harry SYLVESTER is a writer of short stories and articles.
E. I. WATKIN is the author of "The Philosophy of Form" and of "The Bow in the Cloud" in the "Essays in Order" series and various other essays.
Tad ECKAM is the pseudonym of a Midwestern university professor.
Eileen DUGGAN is a New Zealand poet, author of "Bird Songs of New Zealand."
F. A. HERMENS is associate professor of politics at the University of Notre Dame.
Charles O'DONNELL is a member of the faculty of De Paul University, Chicago, Ill.
Elizabeth MORRISSY is professor of political economy at the College of Notre Dame, Baltimore, Md., and member of the Economic Committee of the International Catholic Peace Association.
Walter Prichard EATON is associate professor of playwriting at Yale University, and the author of "On Yankee Hilltops" and many other books.
Thomas Ollive MABBOTT teaches English literature at Hunter College, New York City, and is the editor of the definitive edition of Edgar Allan Poe.
Barry BYRNE is an architect who has specialized in ecclesiastical design and town planning.
Henry TETLOW is a Philadelphia cosmetics manufacturer, and the author of "We Farm for a Hobby and Make It Pay."

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